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LIFE AND TEACHINGS
OF
GURU NANAK
BY
THAKUR SINGH, S. O.

P. W. D.

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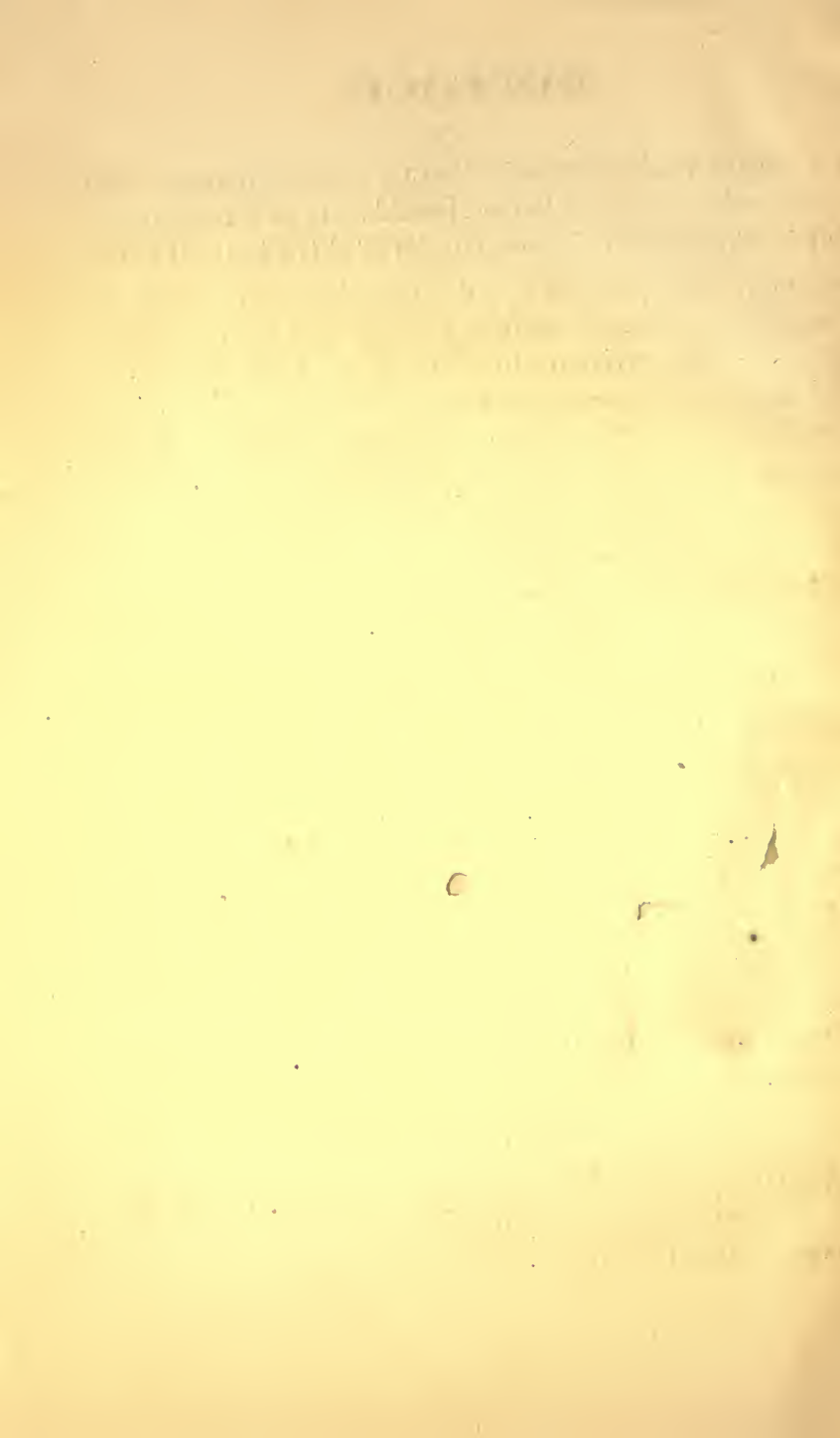
PREFACE.

In *Gurmukhí Bhàshá*, there exist numerous such books, which treat of Guru Nanak's life and teachings ; but in English there are no books of this kind. If there are any; they have been written by those, who had no knowledge of the Gurmukhi literature, which contains all the books, written by Nanak and his successors. Besides, the authors, have endeavoured, in season and out of season, to find faults with the founders of the Khalsa religion and keep the advantages, derived by the people from this true religion, hidden from the readers. On these accounts, such books instead of doing any good, are productive of deplorable effects upon the minds of those, who are desirous of knowing the Khalsa religion in order to embrace it.

I went through all the Gurmukhi *Janamsákhies* of Nanak and noted important facts, which were written in English, so as to meet the required ends. Had those facts been literally translated, the usefulness of this book, which has been written in a foreign tongue, would have been lost. So, I wrote them in such a style and placed them in such an order as to make the book as interesting as possible. If the public will also appreciate this book, my labours will not go in vain.

In conclusion, I would gladly receive any suggestions that would tend to make the book more practically useful, from any, who are interested in the cause of the Khalsa religion.

THE AUTHOR.



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LIFE AND TEACHINGS OF GURU NANAK.

LIST OF ERRATTA.

Chapter.	Page	Line	Erratum.	Correct word.
II	8	24	did their best to make the	did their best to make the day as memorable as their means could permit, but
IV	17	9	leave ...	leaves
IV	17	21	leave ...	leaves
V	29	6	lives ...	lips
V	32	1	and the and the	and the
V	33	6	an extra ...	no extra
VI	38	16	The fact ...	The fact is
VI	50	21	her goose ...	the goose
VIII	68	2	visit the temple.	visit to the temple.
VIII	74	14	oys ...	toys.
VIII	77	13	power of speech	no power of speech
IX	81	8	may ...	may
X	85	9	flew ...	flow
X	88	10	followers ...	flowers
X	88	29	teh ...	the
XI	92	10	old ...	all
XI	93	1	bes ...	best
XI	93	8	village ...	religion
XII	100	3	its antago ...	his antago

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LIFE AND TEACHING OF GURU NANAK

CHAPTER I.

Condition of the Country when Guru Nanak's incarnation took place.

TIMERLANE, the robber-King of Turkistan, had left India nearly half a century before the time we are about to describe ; but the people had not yet revived from the ruin, he had brought on them by his indiscriminate slaughter and plunder. Kings of the Lodhi dynasty were nominal occupants of the throne of this great empire ; but, in reality, the country was portioned out into territories—the possession of many chieftains and princes—each with supreme and irresponsible rule in his own dominions, having the most lax and inefficient governments, and at enmity with and jealous of all his neighbours. Those despotic rulers, who can appropriately be called robbers, considered it their chief duty to rob the peasantry of all, they possessed ; but they had no will or leisure to think of their prosperity.

There being no public or rail roads, travellers journeyed on foot or on horse-back through thick forests and jungles, where they used to be murdered and exposed to the sun, to feast the vultures and kites on their dead bodies.

The rulers had made no arrangements for educating the subject people ; but, instead of supplying the latter with schools and colleges for imparting education to the young children, they had mercilessly burnt the literary books which the Hindus had inherited from their fore-fathers.

Monotheism, which is the product of sound education had become altogether instinct; and idolatry had usurped the noble seat in the human heart, which is destined to God alone. Every city, every town, every village or even a house in India had its local gods, to whom it looked for its protection. Large and splendid buildings were built in honor of these gods and they were worshipped with great pomp and show. By and by, number of these gods had increased so much as 3 erores ; but the Hindus still finding these myriads of gods insufficient, enlisted the large trees and tombs in the already long list of their deities. In short, idols had become so numerous, that it was said to be easier to find a god than a man in the city.

Ignorance had laid such a firm grasp on the minds of the people and idolatry weakened their conscience to such an extent, that they could think of nothing but

debauchery and adultery. These both vices had reached to such an extreme, that the young women used to be forcibly caught with impunity in the open markets.

Fortunately, the embers of the pile of the famous Padmani, who had burnt herself to preserve her chastity from the voluptuous Allaudin Khiljee, were not yet utterly extinguished. They found a good place in the hearts of her own sex and kindled such a fire of enthusiasm in the minds of the females, that they would have willingly followed her noble example, had they found an opportunity to display their daring courage. But what the poor virgin could do when she was so suddenly dragged away by her ravishers that she could have no time to prepare even a pile for her burning!

Woe to those parents, who had marriageable daughters in such a time! Deplorable and shocking is it to contemplate the misery and sorrow of the poor parent, whose grown-up daughter was carried away before his very eyes! God alone knows what would be the punishment of those wicked men, who had brought such an unheard-of misery and ineffable sorrow upon the peace-loving nations of this land.

These heart-rending events continued to happen so long that they hardened the heart of the naturally mild Hindu to such a degree that he thought it expedient to murder the female child before she was allowed to take even a single breath in the world. Thus,

thousands of girls were put to death and interred into the ground by their own parents. For in those wild days, when lawlessness and high-handedness were prevalent in the country—when sword was the only arbiter in settling mutual disputes—it was dangerous for a man to possess wealth as well as his opposite sex; while the former could be secreted in the ground, but there was no help for the latter.

In such wild days, a pregnant woman becomes burdensome to her husband and if she has child with her, she is much more burdensome to him. The male child is expected to become helpmate to his parents; but the more the female child grows, the more anxious and careful her parents have to grow about her.

A woman, in those days, delivers a female child. She weeps and cries, that she can not do away with it. Her family-members run in haste to her and exclaim, "Have you forgotten the fate of Rama's grown-up daughter who was siezed by the governor of this town and put into his herem? When her parents could do nothing to save her from the accursed fate, they made suicide. Do you not remember those marriageable girls, who were carried away by those ferocious mountaineers whose mere touch is a pollution." The words remind her of the detestable scenes, which happened, not long ago, before her very eyes and displace all the noble ideas, she had cherished for a while for her helpless female baby. She, then, prefers smothering the child to entrusting her in the hands

ruffians. Thus, in those vile days, infanticide, which is an atrocious crime and the vilest sin, took rise in the country, where killing even a bird has been considered a great crime.

But the pious parent, who could not persuade himself to perpetrate infanticide, began to marry his daughters as soon as they were born. This apparently mild course was so generally adopted by the parents, that it became a custom among the people and came to our time.

Early marriage although it seemed quite harmless in those days sapped the foundation of our vitality and deprived us both of mental and physical powers. Well-wishers of the country vainly hope to produce warriors and intellectual men, when the stamina of our striplings is exhausted in immaturity before the development of their organs.

Let us now consider the fate of the hapless widow, whose protector was snatched away by the cruel hand of Death. How could she hope to protect her chastity against the merciless ravishers, when her sisters who had husbands for their protection were in constant danger? On these accounts, the poor widow thought it more advisable to burn herself on the same pile with her deceased husband than to expose her shame to the strangers. Thus, in those days, seed of Sattism was sown in this golden land, which once boasted of its great men and philosophers.

Thus, we inherited three evil customs : infanticide, early marriage and Sattism from our ancestors ; for which they can not be blame-worthy ; for they were obliged to adopt them in order to preserve their honor.

Infanticide and Sattism were stopped by the strong hand of law ; but early marriage is incessantly making its victims all around. For this, we should never blame the benevolent British Government ; but the blame can strongly be put upon the social reformers, who deliver lengthy speeches on the pulpit ; but hesitate to set an example for their weak countrymen.

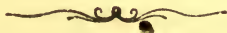
Lastly, we do justice to the Brahmin priests, for the services, rendered by them in those vile days. The reverend priests cared nothing but to enrich themselves at the expense of the ignorant men, who had solemnly put their faith upon them. They composed *Shastras*, containing frightful and incredulous stories to cheat the listeners. They represented the true philosophers, like Sri Krishna and Ram Chanderji in such defamatory forms, that every one loathed to see them. They so much disgraced the late great hero, *Hanúmán*, that he would have used their bones and bodies in the construction of another Saithander,* had he been living at that time.

In those evil days, good men offered up their fervent prayers to the Almighty for peace and order : but

* The bridge constructed by Ram Chander Ji with the help of Hanuman.

the robbers and ruffians earnestly longed for the continuation of the same disorder.

Pious Hindus, Geeta * in their hands, read the words of Sri Krishna again and again and anxiously waited the time, when Sri Krishna's true words, that "God descends from heaven upon this world from time to time to restore true religion and destroy irreligion," would be fulfilled.



* Religious book of the Hindus, composed by Sri Krishna,

CHAPTER II

Guru Nanak's incarnation—his childhood.

1469 A. D.

WHEN irreligion and demoralisation were so prevalent in India, as described in the preceding chapter, there lived a man by caste Khatri at a village, named Talwundi, which is situated on the bank of the river Ravi. He was called Kalu and he held a respectable office of Patwari, which he always executed with justice and impartiality. His outer appearances were also equal to his virtues and his wife was in no way inferior to him.

They lived happily and contentedly ; but now and then their happiness was marred by the remembrance of this fact that their marriage was not blessed for years by the birth of a male child. They prayed long and long ; at last, after many anxious days and nights, she became pregnant and brought forth a male child, who was named Nanak. By long investigations it was found out that this auspicious event took place on the 15th. Katak* Sudi,† 1526 Bikaram era.

Truth is that though the parents on this auspicious event fed the poor and distributed alms among the deserving beggars ; and did their best to make the

* 8th month in the Hindu Calendar.

† The Light part of every month is called Sudi and dark part is called Badi.

they had kept no record relative to their son's birth; for they could not foresee that their son would be so renowned throughout the world that his character and conduct would be a subject of long discussion among the educated men. O, God, mysterious are Thy ways, —so mysterious indeed they are that even the parents, who brought up the child, were kept quite ignorant of their son's everlasting future fame. Not a single thought was allowed to flash in their minds that their son would be so great as to lead the nations of the world to the right path.

No one at that time, could believe that the son of a poor tradesman, whose name was unknown beyond his native village, would be the founder of the great Khalsa* religion, whose followers would once take an honorable seat among the independent nations of the world; and if ever deprived of that absolute power, they would at least be the "shield and sword" of their rulers.

Who can disbelieve the omnipotent power of God? He, beyond all doubts, can raise a mountain out of a mole-hill.

But let us now take the thread of our narrative. Days passed gladly away. Nanak grew old enough to receive education. As there were no schools in those days, only the mercantile classes taught their sons so much as to enable them to read and write their accounts;

* Pure.

parents of Nanak gave him the same kind of education, which he soon mastered.

The parents were much pleased to see their son sagacious and intelligent above his age : but this fact displeased them much more that he was little inclined towards the worldly affairs. He was seen either discussing with the priests on religious matters, or helping the poor with what he possessed.

One day, Kalu handed Nanak Rs. 40, with direction to purchase grains at a rate, cheap enough to ensure profit. Nanak received the sum and left his house in order to comply with his paternal orders as soon as he could possibly do. He had not gone far, when his eyes fell upon several wretched men, who were sitting together in a garden in a very pensive state. They had tasted no food for a couple of days and had not a single cloth upon their bodies. Their nakedness and barefootedness moved Nanak to such a compassion, that he purchased clothes and eatables with what he had with him and distributed those articles among them. He, thus, relieved them from their misery and returned home empty-handed, but well satisfied with the noble work, he had done.

Such acts of charity and other miraculous works performed by Nanak in his childhood, fully prove, that he was endowed with all those qualities, which make the founder of a religion successful in his design.



CHAPTER III

Guru Nanak's Youth.

TIME soon passed away; Nanak grew old enough to earn his livelihood. Kalu explained him all the rise and falls of the world and ups and downs of the time. He did his best to impress on Nanak's mind the inevitable necessity of linking to some profession in this world. He pointed out Nanak the commercial business, which the former considered a very lucrative one, to start without any further delay. But Nanak finding this profession prejudicial to the noble object in his mind, showed no inclination to it. When Kalu's efforts to induce Nanak to the worldly affairs were all frustrated; he sent Nanak to his son-in-law, named Jai Ram who was at that time in the service of the Nawab of Kapurthala.

On his arrival there, Nanak was presented to the Nawab, who offered him the post of a store-keeper in his State. This post was accepted by Nanak, partly because he found it suitable to his charitable disposition and partly because he desired not to displease his elders by his continual refusals to their requests.

Nanak was now put in the charge of a store, which consisted of all kind of provisions for the Nawab's Kitchen. Having a large store at his disposal, Nanak extended his charity to its full length. He provided

the hungry with eatables and the ragged with clothes. He removed the wants of the paupers and the distresses of the afflicted. He spent all his spare time and money to make the fatherless and motherless happy and prosperous. His charity went so far as to those poor widows, who could not go outdoors. In a word, the rich and the poor were equally profited by him; the former by his precept only and the latter by both his charity and precept.

His fame went all around and he was called the protector and the teacher of the rich and the poor. Day and night, he gave the people lessons on religion and morals and taught them to love one another. Strife and hatred were forgotten; peace and tranquillity reigned the minds of the people all around.

This state of things lasted so long that it so offended the goddess jealousy that she sent her votaries to overthrow the castle of fame, built by Nanak, without paying any regard to this fact that it was built not on a sandy soil, but on a solid ground.

How bloody this goddess is ! Thousands of men of all ranks and climes are daily sacrificed on her shrine ; but her thirst for blood is not yet quenched. So piercing her eyes are that even the noble-minded men, who have no selfish motives, but labour day and night to ameliorate the wretched condition of their fellow-creature can not escape her ravages. So indiscriminate her destruction is, that she makes all grades of men her

victims, without any distinction of their caste, colour and clime. We are much tired of her presence, will she ever bid adieu to the human world?

This vile goddess, finding all other efforts in vain, incited some of Nanak's fellow subordinates to complain against him to the Nawab who, as soon as he heard the complaint, took immediate steps to examine the accounts of the store in Nanak's charge.

The Nawab checked the materials and found them more than the balance in the papers, which were so neatly and correctly detailed that the Nawab found an entire satisfaction in Nanak's work to the utter disappointment of Nanak's opponents.

Nanak, while he was in the service of the Nawab, was married to a young girl of the same age and race. Although, his wife was not endowed with such noble ideas as her husband was ; she, nevertheless, possessed a heart, noble enough to learn good precepts.

Nanak taught her religion and morals and made her a model to her sex.

Nanak, now, had three duties to perform simultaneously. He served the Nawab to his entire satisfaction and helped the rich and poor in their distresses. But he spent a great deal of his time in bringing happiness on his family, so that his wife had no cause to complain against him.

Time thus glided away soon. At last, their happy marriage was blessed by the birth of two sons. The elder was called Siri Chand, and the younger Lakhmi Chand.

On the birth of his sons, he denounced many evil customs, which the Hindus observed on those occasions. He neither went to worship the temples nor to make offerings to the tombs. He, in short, celebrated his son's birthdays without any show and ceremony. Thus numerous men, influenced by his example, gave up evil customs and superstition, which were prevalent for a long time among them.

On the other hand, Nanak practically refuted the ideas, which were held by the Hindus for countless ages. They believed that it was impossible for a man to obtain "*Mukti*," * while engaged in family life. They, on this account, used to leave their homes and families, shave their head and beard and retreat to jungles and forests, where they sat for years before the blazes of a burning fire and stood for months together in the cold winter-days in order to get spiritual life. But Nanak practically showed that all these proceedings on their part were useless and proved by his life the possibility of gaining world and heaven at the same time.

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CHAPTER IV

Guru Nanak leaves home for foreign travels and delivers lecture in a small village.

SONS of Nanak grew old enough to look after their business and provide themselves with their necessities. Nanak, now, had no cares to take for the support of his family, as its burden was willingly taken by his dutiful sons on their own heads.

He, then, utilized this spare time in preaching the words of God to the people all around, who had already enriched themselves by his lessons. He at last, had no more task to do there; he, therefore, made up his mind to visit the places far from his home.

He informed of his intentions to his disciples and made preparations to start—not such preparations as the merchant and soldier do, when the former goes to buy merchandises and the latter leaves home to wage war against a foreign enemy. He set out with what he had on his body. He provided himself neither with gold and silver nor with brass. He took neither two coats and trousers, nor staves. He with his firm resolution and true spirit, entered the field of God, as he was fully convinced of this fact, that “workman is worthy of his meat.”

He distributed whatever his adherents Bala and Mardana, who accompanied him in his long journeys,

had brought with them, among the poor and needy. He, moreover, rebuked them on their faithlessness and told them to see the crops of fields and the flowers of gardens, that they toiled not, nor did they ever plough, but the Heavenly Father clothed them so richly, that even the richest man in the world could not equal them.

Nanak, thus, continued his journeys and at the same time he gave lessons on religion and morals to his adherents as well as to those, who met him on the way. He went on and on. At last, the Sun, who had seen Nanak's disinterested labours to profit the people by his example and precepts, hid his face for shame; for he (the sun) could no longer bear to heat the brain of that noble person, who used to give his lessons freely to everyone without any distinction of caste, colour and rank—who had given up all the luxuries and comforts of home and taken upon him the troubles of long and wearisome journeys, in order to better the wretched condition of his countrymen—and who, moreover had plunged himself into a vast sea of miseries to bring his fellow-creatures, who were hopelessly struggling for life in it, on the safe bank.

Oh! it is very painful to leave one's home and family, chiefly that family, which is blessed by children, the best fruits of family life. How far tired a man returns home in the evening after his day's tiresome works, all his weariness flies away as soon as the sweet voice of his baby rings in his ears. All the woes and

sorrows of a distressed father disappear, as the mist disappears before the sun, when the shining face of his child comes in his sight.

And home itself is so sweet and charming—its atmosphere so fragrant—its air so soft and balmy, that man bears the taunts of his neighbours and undergoes the pangs of starvation and nakedness; but he shudders at the bare idea of leaving it even for the better land. If a man leave it; he leave it temporarily for wealth and honor, in order to outshine his equals on his return home. When his object is accomplished, he forsakes the splendid buildings, equipped with the best furniture, and crowded markets of a large foreign city, and returns home to pass his remaining days in a muddy hut of his lonely village.

When nature has implanted such an intense love for home and family in the bosom of the human heart that he cannot shake off their influences even in the direst calamity, it is, then, beyond the scope of the human knowledge to describe the energy and zeal of that man, who leave them both, not to enrich himself but to ameliorate the pitiable condition of his fellow creatures. If such a man may be called the teacher of the human-kind, it is no mistake, but it is a veracity. If he may be denominated the Saviour of the world, it is no exaggeration, but it is a reality.

But let us now take the thread of our narrative Night fell on Nafako with his disciples, Bala and

Mardana halted under a tree, standing by the way. He was so tired of that day's journey that he slept soundly upon the bare ground without any couch or straw under him.

Night, thus, soon passed away. He awoke early in the morning; took ablutions as he usually did, and offered up his prayers to God.

In the meanwhile soft rays of the morning sun shone on the muddy walls of a village, situated at an arrow's shot from the place, where he had taken his lodgings for the night. As soon as the village came in his sight; he immediately directed his steps to it without even waiting for his breakfast. When he was told by his disciples to partake of it, he refused it saying "My food is to do the will of Him, who sent me." He entered the village and approached the villagers as if they were his friends and relations. As the villagers were already assembled in a place for some private purpose; he, therefore, found a good opportunity to address them as follows:

"There exists One, who is the creator and master of all the animate and inanimate objects. He possesses such an unlimited power as to destroy and make the world again in a twinkling of an eye. He is present everywhere; but His omnipresence can be perceived by him alone, who loves Him and His creatures more than his own life. He is all-knowing, all-seeing and so infinitely wise that man, the wisest of all the creatures,

is quite unable to describe even one of His qualities, and utterly in darkness to comprehend even one of His insolvable mysteries. He, the Heavenly providence, provides all the creatures with what they want and requires nothing in return from them. But it is the bounden duty of every one to love his creator and pay reverence to Him for the purification and elevation of his own soul.

On the other hand, no one can gratify the appetites of his soul without loving Him, who created the earth and heavens: for the soul feels such strong appetites that they make it unable to perform its functions, if remain unsatisfied for a long time.

Human body feels hunger and thirst and requires food and drink for their satisfaction ; but the human soul hungers and thirsts after the Creator and feels an intense desire to communicate with the Supreme and All-pervading One who is altogether distinct from the creatures. He has made, as the lotus flower remains distinct from the pool on which it rests.

But, man is a shallow-minded creature ; he labours day and night to nourish his body, which to-day is and tomorrow to be burnt to ashes ; but he takes no thought to feed the eternal and indestructible soul, which transmigrates again and again until it attains its perfection.

If a man ever tries to appease the cravings of his soul, he uses not the means, which nature has provided for its satisfaction; but he resorts to those adverse methods, which, instead of doing any good, produce the most deplorable effects.

Generally, he sets his heart, and soul on the worldly wealth and honour and employs his energies in the worship of stone and statues. But, Alas! they give no gratification to his soul.

He, then, undertakes to visit the places of pilgrimage at the exorbitant expense of his time and money; but returns home without any change in his soul.

He, at last, forsakes his home and family, shaves his head and beard and retreats to jungle and forests, to pass his days among the wolves and deer; where he sits before the blazes of "strong fire in the scorching rays of the summer sun and stands still for hours in the cold water during the inclement weather of the winter season: but he finds all his efforts in vain.

He, thus, goes on and on in his useless efforts, until death feels compassion to end him in his despair.

Alas! it is the fate of man, who is the noblest work of the creator—who has ransacked the earth and oceans and tamed the wild beasts and birds—who is proud of being the revealer of the mysteries of nature and inventor and possessor of all the knowledge and wisdom, that he loses his life under the misconception and

without the knowledge of this fact, that it is impossible to meditate with advantage on spiritual things, while engaged in the ordinary business of life without retreating to the wilderness or the seclusion of a temple and monastery.

Besides, it is a severe blot on his intellect that he is so much deluded by the beautiful mirage of Maya, that he can not see that the noble seat of God is nowhere but in his own heart, which, if purged of all its corruptions, reflects the divine light.

What are the corruptions of the human heart, remains now to be explained.

They are manifold, but evil speaking, unchastity, anger, covetousness, selfishness and want of faith in God, are most prominent among them. These corrupt the heart and soul : as much as the health of body is endangered by the consumption of noxious food and drink. If a man gives up all these corruptions, his heart becomes as clear as a mirror ; he finds full satisfaction to his soul's appetites and enjoys all the spiritual pleasures in his own home—those pleasures for the attainment of which he penetrates the icy mountains and thick jungles at the risk of his life !

I have, thus, pointed you out the easiest and direct rout to the Divine abode ; he who treads on it, reaches his destination without any obstacle in his way. I, therefore, in conclusion, ask you to make a solemn

promise to give up all the evil habits and to worship the only God, the creator of the whole universe."

These words produced such a good effect on the minds of the listeners, that they put belief upon God and willingly promised to desist from idolatry for ever.

Nanak, having, thus, effected the conversion of a large group of idolators to monotheism left the village and set out on his journey. He went on and on without any incident, worthy of relating here, until he reached in the neighbourhood of a town, which forms the subject of the ensuing chapter.



CHAPTER V

Guru Nanak's visit to Emnabad, his interview with Babar, his lecture to the distressed people of that town, his prophesy as to the future fate of his followers.

NANAK, having left the village, described in the preceding chapter, continued his marches for a few weeks without making any halt. His disciples Bala and Mardana showed signs of fatigue and persisted on him to take rest at least for a couple of days.

One evening, when they were on their way, they asked him to stop in a garden earlier than they usually did. Nanak looked all arround and saw a group of trees at no great distance. He pointed it out to his disciples, as it seemed to be a good place for taking refreshments and lodgings for the night. Accordingly, he with his disciples, directed his steps to it. He had not proceeded far towards the group when a large town, enveloped in thick trees, became visible.

Spires of the temples and plastered walls of the lofty buildings, began to shine in the sun. Though they shone dimly in the faint rays of the setting sun; they, nevertheless, did not fail to convince him of the splendour and importance of the place.

Luxuriant crops, standing all arround produced a full impression on his mind as to the fertility of its land. Large gardens, which were found in abundance, fully showed the taste and fashion of its inhabitants.

In the meanwhile, Nanak was much astonished by an extraordinary scene, which met his eyes. He looked over the country again and again to make it doubly sure, but the same strange spectacle came in his sight. He surveyed it much more carefully and scrutinizingly, but he beheld not a single cultivator working in the fields, nor, a traveller, passing by the roads. Numerous cows and horses were seen grazing in the crops and buffaloes and oxen were found wandering in the vegetable plots, without any human being to drive them out of them.

It appeared as if the cultivators having foreseen that their crops would remain fruitless had allowed their domestic animals to banquet upon the rich and green contents of their fields, or some dire calamity obliged them to save their beasts from starvation with what they had intended for their own lives.

He, then raised his eyes from the fields to the gardens; the latter scene was seen all around. The gardens were neatly kept and consisted of trees laden with the choicest fruits and lovely flowers; but no one kept watch over them, as if not to disturb the parrots and squirrels in their pleasing avocation.

He was, yet absorbed in these meditations, he beheld a large army, which consisted of legions of 'men,' if their cruelty and high-handedness ever entitled them to assume this title, so noble and high. For the brutality, which was depicted on their faces, showed that they were no more than savages, and their detestable appearances, filthy clothes and loose trousers, fully proved that the Satan, in the various forms of human beings, had come to bring devastation on the peace loving people of this happy land.

They however without any exception, were so engaged in their respective works, that they did not see that a man with heart as transparant as a mirror stood before them.

Those, who were unscrupulous among them, were cooking their supper in earthen vessels as black as their hearts themselves, but a great part of the multitude washed their hands and feet to prepare themselves for the evening prayer.

In the meantime a loud cry "God is great" made them stand up in a line as an infantry stands before its drill-master in a parade. Only this difference was discernible that the Drill-master stands with his face towards those, whom he wants to drill: but here a man in his substitute stood with his back towards them.

In this wise they got up and sat down as well as they offered up their prayers to God. It seemed as if

they, by their prayers, were reminding Him, the heavenly Father, of the depopulation, they had brought upon the peaceful country and of the blood, they had shed of their fellow-creatures, without any fault and crime, in order to satisfy their unquenchable thirst for blood and wealth.

But to the unprejudiced mind of Nanak, this process of getting up and sitting down along with prayer seemed to have some wisdom in it. For he pointed out the moral of his observations to his disciples that it was the intelligence of Mohamad, the founder of Mohamadan religion that he tried to kill two birds with one stone; so that the evening prayer as well as evening exercise were effected in the same process and at the same time. They, thus, continued praying for nearly half an hour; at last, they retired to their respective beds.

Bala and Mardana, who were already much tired, requested Nanak to stop in the garden, close by. He, accordingly, directed his steps to it.

Garden was soon reached. He, with his disciples, halted under a tree, suitable for the nightly repose. The disciples, as soon as they had had their supper, went to their beds and fell fast asleep, as they were mere companions in his journey and not in his philanthropic works: but Nanak did not close his eyes even for an instant; as his mind was too active with thousands of reflections to yield to the influences of slumber. How

sleep could visit his eyes, when moans and cries of distressed townsmen were clearly audible to him in the dead of night.

Night, thus, passed away. He rose at an early hour in the morning and having performed his ablutions and prayers as usual, he set out from his halting place.

By making enquiries as to the whereabouts of the town-gate, it was known that its ingress and egress were closed in order that the townsmen might not be able to make communication and receive provision from without.

This fact would have dispirited a worldly man; but Nanak walked all around and by some means he effected his entrance into the besieged town.

As soon as he reached the market of the town, he found that the shops were all closed and there was not a human being to point him out the causes of this general catastrophe. It seemed as if the shopkeepers had gone to some far-off land for some mercantile purpose or they were at strike to close the market for the redress of their grievances.

In the meanwhile hues and cries of the townsmen became audible to him. He, then, entered the streets and found them smeared with blood, as if they were painted with red colour.

Many of the wounded were weltering in the blood,

which oozed copiously from their wounds and the bodies of those, who had lately expired, served a good feast to the village dogs and kites. Widows and widowers had forgotten the loss of their husbands and wives respectively and children and parents dropped not a single tear on their bereavements. In fact, in that direst calamity everyone was absorbed in preserving his own precious life.

For life is so dear that man sacrifices all in his power to save it even for a single moment ; and so charming is it that even an aged man, worn out by long ages, deprived of the power of vision and hearing, unable to shuffle and crawl, feels an intense desire to breathe even a breath more in the atmosphere of this world.

Man calls his wife his better half ; regards his children as the dearest things in the world ; but when danger arrives, he forsakes them all. In safety he makes solemn promises to sacrifice his precious life for them, but even on the appearance of an imminent danger he abandons them for the security of his own life.

It is life dearer than riches themselves, for the attainment of which, man leaves his home and family, loses his independence and freedom and serves such hard-hearted men, who do not feel pity upon their servants even so much as they show upon their dogs and cats—such treatment he bears for preserving that life, which sooner or later is no more !

Nature itself has implanted such intense love for life in the human heart that the famished parents, in terrible famines, have devoured their own children to save themselves from the pangs of starvation—those happy children, whom he had reared with great deal of care and pain—those children on whose lives and brows he had imprinted numerous kisses of paternal love even on the preceding day.

Ah ! This love of life sometimes degrades a man to the level of the wild beasts and birds, nay, even lower than that ?

There was such a struggle for life in Emnabad as it was above described. Loud cries for help came from all quarters ; but who could help them in that general distress.

Nanak, who was not a man but an incarnation of God, was not, however, a little discouraged and dispirited by those scenes—horrible though they were, indeed, in their nature, nay, he set his heart and soul to help those who required his assistance.

A human being would have returned from that place crestfallen and dishearted ; but Nanak took immediate measures which were in his power to relieve them from those unheard-of-pains and miseries.

Everyone would have left the people alone in those troubles, but he, like a good shepherd, shared his sheep in their distress.

He dressed the wounds of some and warmed the bruises of others. He soothed the distressed widows who were shedding tears of affliction owing to the non-existence of a protector ; and helped the orphans, who had no guardians to look after them.

He brought the wounded, who were lying in the streets, disabled by severe cuts, back to their houses and sat for hours by their couches, applying available balms on their wounds. He cooked for those families who were severely injured and tore up his own clothes to clothe those, who lay outdoors stark-naked. In short he spared no pains in performing those charitable works. To tell the truth, he did much more than those who pretend to equal him, would have done, had they been placed under such circumstances.

General impressment was going on in the town. The mountaineers, who formed the besieging army, seized the townsmen for their works. Some were employed by them in scraping grass for their horses others in rubbing their steeds. A few brought water for them in such dirty vessels, which the townsmen in safety could not even touch for fear that their bodies and souls would be polluted by coming in contact with them. In short the townsmen did such irksome works for them that even the description of them is unbearable.

In this general impressment, Nanak was also seized by a man of ferocious and dusky complexions. Nanak made no resistance ; but followed him willingly ;

as he himself watched an opportunity to speak personally with Babar, the leader of that army. As soon as he was presented before Babar, the latter recognised the former to be a man of honor and respect. He received Nanak with great kindness and courtesy and made him sit on an honourable seat next his own.

In that hour Babar was engaged in his cups. He presented Nanak a cup full of wine. Nanak refused it saying "Excuse me please, as the intoxication of the wine, you drink lasts no more; but the wine I have drunk keeps me perpetually intoxicated."

These words were spoken with such a sincerity of heart, that Babar was struck to hear them. He was fully convinced of what he had conceived in his mind that he who was sitting by him, was not a man, but an angel from heaven.

Babar asked Nanak the motives which induced the latter to come in that general distress. Nanak replied that he came in this world to serve the humankind in general and to bring the people to the right path. He added that he was sent from above to settle the dispute between Hindus and Mohamadans, who being the sons of the Same Father, were engaged in useless quarrels.

These words so pleased Babar, that he asked Nanak what he wanted. Nanak replied that he wanted nothing but that the seige might be raised from this town.

Siege was immediately raised. Townsmen had relief from the persecution of the mountaineers.

Nanak stopped there a few days more, and the and the day preceding his departure he collected the townsmen and spoke to them as follows.

“I am much grieved at the irreparable loss, you have suffered and offer my condolence to all of you in your breavements. You think that all these miseries and troubles come upon you without any cause and without any fault of yours. You think that God takes no care of your bodies and that He has left you alone in these calamities I warn you that it is not the case. God loves you so warmly as He loves all other nations. He helps you as willingly as He helps all others. But you yourselves are so self-willed and wayward as to defy the unalterable laws of Nature. Think for a while in your minds, if you eat stones and earth, instead of food, which nature has provided for the nourishment of the humanbody, will your bodies retain their strength? Your bodies will have wastage and perish within a short time.

“When such is the state of the body, how can you expect that your souls will retain their normal strength without the consumption of their proper food. You have taken no care to feed your souls ; on this account your souls have become so weak as not to be able to perform their proper functions. It is because you are so timid that you can not defy the foreigners. It is because you are powerless to face even the rude nations. Heroism and bravery, which spring from a sound soul, are no more with you. You are reduced to such a strait that you are unable to protect even your lives.

If you want to be a strong nation ; if you wish to take an honourable seat among the independent nations of the world ; if you desire to bring back the lost glory of your forefathers, give your souls their proper nourishment, which is nothing else but the love of Him, who created the world and heavens—which is an extraordinary thing but to worship Him, who has made you as well as all the other nations.”

“ You mourn day and night for your losses ; you envy other nations their bodily as well as their intellectual strength ; but you take no measure to equal them. You falsely blame God that He has made you so weak, but you pay no attention to strengthen your own brotherhood. On the other hand, you hate your brethren and call them mean and sordid and thus by your folly you weaken yourselves by separating them from your society.”

“ Will you, under such circumstances, form a strong nation and secure an enviable position among other nations ? Never, never.”

“ This day I prophesy before you that time is not distant, when these men of low-castes, whom you have boycotted from your society ; and in whose ears you put lead so as not to enable them to hear the hymns of your Sanskrit Shastras and songs of the Vedas, will have a Veda written in their own popular tongue, and in characters, very easy to learn. These men, whom you have thrown away from your community as a

rubbish on the dung-hill, will have purification so as to surpass you in bodily as well as in spiritual strength. They will have such a martial strength and courage as to bring all of you under their rule. They, filled with true spirit, will march to the abode of these mountaineers, who have, thus, mercilessly persecuted you and will drive them out of their mountain-fastnesses as a punishment for the ruin they brought upon you. They, thus, for years, will maintain their honor and indepenence and protect you against all foreign encroachments. In a word, they will achieve that enviable position, which every nation aspires to attain."

"But, alas ! this high position will make them conceited and forgetful of their Creator. Selfishness and vanity will begin to overrule them. Riches will make them inclined to feel hatred towards their poor brethren and stick to their former caste-system and superstitions.

"In their palmiest days, they will build their temples, not with a view to worship God, but to outshine their neighbours by their splendour and wealth. These temples will be put in the charge of the hypocrites and vagabands, who will have no avocation but to beg charity from door to door and to sleep like buffaloes for the whole day long."

"They will form a priesthood, more cunning and crafty than the Brahmans and will make fictions more frightful and incredulous than the Hindu Puranas."

“All these circumstances would be a stumbling block to them and they would fall headlong from the high position to the place, they had occupied for long and long ages ”

“Though their conceit and pride will tend to such a fall as not to leave them any apparent hope to ascend again to that climax ; but the martial courage, infused in their souls by me and my successors, will remain for ever and ever with them. They will astonish the world even in their fall, by their bravery and heroism and will be of great service to their foreign rulers, in their direst calamities.”

“It is not all, there is some thing more in store for them.”

“If, in their misfortune, they are so wise as to feel contrition for their past misdeeds; if they give up conceit and superstition ; if they improve their brotherhood by removing the barrier of caste-system from them ; and, above all, if they faithfully and loyally serve their worldly masters, they shall regain their lost position. For their foreign rulers, more enlightened than then, will give them sound education, teach them political and military tactics and make them wise enough to face the waves of conceit and vanity, which had so hopelessly drowned them. Thus, under their benevolent rulers they will be able to make up their deficiencies and when those foreign rulers, weary of the burden of rule in India, will retire from the country

—as time and change went for all—my followers shall succeed them, not as a hostile enemy but as a son succeeds his father.”

“I have prophesied the rise and fall of my followers—I have sketched the destiny of my disciples—I have described the wonders, which they will work in their future days. Now it remains for me to point you out that I ask nothing from them, who become my followers. Neither, I tell them to go far off as pilgrims nor, do I point them out to leave their houses and families, but I teach them to perform the duties, entrusted to them, with honesty and serve their worldly masters with fear, trembling and singleness of their hearts. I impress on their minds that they should love God and worship Him, who created them.”

“These are the simple conditions, on which I make the men of all castes my disciples. I, in conclusion, ask you to make a solemn promise to fulfil them.”

Townsmen listened these words with great attention. They, at last promised to throw their idols in their ponds and not to worship them in the future. They solemnly put faith upon God and became his disciples.

Nanak's object being fulfilled, he left the town and resumed his journey.



CHAPTER VI.

(Guru Nanak's visit to Hardwar)

1. *Description of Hardwar, the place of Hindu pilgrimage.*
 2. *Guru Nanak's visit to that place.*
 3. *Causes of the poverty of India.*
 4. *Guru Nanak's lecture to the pilgrims.*
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HARDWAR is not a large and splendid city; but it is an important place of pilgrimage. It is situated on the right bank of the Ganges and is the first city, which meets this mighty river as soon as she emerges from the dark recesses to the Himalaya Mountains.

It is surrounded on the north by a range of hills, which are either covered by luxuriant herbs, or paved all over by stones, as though nature itself by its foreknowledge had paved them for the convenience of pilgrims.

Palm trees, standing here and there on the banks of the Ganges, like wooden pillars; and fertile valleys, which are spread out like a sheet of green paper on either side of the river, much more increase the pleasantness and healthiness of that place.

Plantations of sugar-canes, fields of wheat and barley, waving like ripples and billows in the soft

winds, creepings of cucumbers and melons, which grow in abundance on the sandy grounds along the Ganges, still more enhance the beauty of the scene.

Transparent water of the Ganges, running calmly close by the city, pucca ghats and lofty buildings, which are built by the Rajas and Maharajas for their own accommodation as well as for the convenience of pilgrims, make the place worthy to inspect and worthy to live.

People from all parts of India reach Hardwar for bathing as well as for throwing nails and boneashes of their relations and friends, who have lately died. The latter is one of the most important duties, which the Hindus consider themselves under an obligation to perform for their kinsmen after their death ; and to the former process they resort for their own sake. The fact that the Hindus believe that the Ganges-water has an efficiency to ward off the sins of a human being—how far detestable and horrible his past misdeeds may be—as well as to enable him to withstand evil in future days. Sacredness of the Ganges-water is so much impressed on their minds that every pilgrim brings it in flasks to his home for the purifications of his family-members, whom circumstances could not allow to leave their homes for performing the sacred ablution.

Every Hindu family keeps at least some stock of the Ganges-water in order to use it in religious rites. It is put in the mouth of the dying men, when all hopes

for his life are gone, in order to know if he actually ceased to live. In short, Hindus use this water in all the ceremonies, whether the ceremony may be in the celebration of a son's birth or in the honor and memory of a deceased aged parent.

To tell the truth, the Ganges serves the Hindu community so far that a few drops of her water can purify any of its members, who have willingly or negligently polluted themselves by eating some eatables from the hands of a Christian or Mohamadan or by coming in contact with the men of low-castes.

Under such circumstances it is no exaggeration to say that but for her kind intervention, numerous Hindus; charged with the violation of social laws, would have been separated from their friends to increase the bulk of the followers of other religions.

Whether these beliefs are imaginary or true, we are not in a position to discuss them here; but it is true that the Ganges-water retains its purity and transparency for years, and like any other water it is never contaminated by the lapse of time.

Although the Ganges from her rise to mouth is looked by the Hindus with the highest reverence, yet the water, taken from that river at Hardwar is considered a best antidote against the above-mentioned evils. It is because people from all parts of India flock in the fields and pastures of Hardawar, which has acquired a world wide renown.

Nanak, hearing that a general assemblage of the people was to be held at Hardawar, reached there at an opportune time.

It was the morning of a certain day in summer season, when he stood on the top of the steps, which are called "*har ki pauri*" or steps leading to God's abode. Though the sky was dusky, as the mist, which generally overhangs the mountains, had not yet disappeared, yet everything could be easily seen and distinguished.

Numerous pilgrims had already assembled on the spot, but groups after groups were still coming from every nook and corner of the city. Costumes of various kinds, chiefly the head-cloths of pilgrims showed that the men from all provinces of India had collected in that great rendezvous for some special object and purpose. "Punjabees" who formed the greatest part of the multitude were distinguishable by their large turbans and muscular bodies; and round *pagries* and *dhoties* could not fail to prove that the wearers were no other than "Marwaries and Dakhnies."

This survey was not yet over, that the piercing moans and cries of a distressed human-being became audible to Nanak, who immediately set out to enquire into the cause of the catastrophe.

He had not gone far, when he beheld a boy of six years, weeping and crying before a Brahman priest,

who was standing there motionless, with a voluminous book in his hands. The boy, his hands folded on his breast, besought the priest again and again to let him drop his deceased father's nails and boneashes, which the boy had brought with him; but he was not allowed to do so without paying at least rupees five to the priest.

The boy, then, opened his purse and showed that he had Rs. 3 all in all with him. He told that out of that sum, Rs. 2 would scarcely be sufficient for defraying his expenses back to his home, and the balance Re. 1 he promised to pay the priest for accomplishing his object.

But the priest opened his book and read out that that boy's father had paid the Rs. 25 on the death of that boy's grandfather, who had also bestowed on him a good round sum on many occasions; and the priest, therefore, would not accept Rs. 2 from the son and grandson of such wealthy men. The boy replied that his forefathers were undoubtedly rich; but his father's accidental and untimely death, which occurred by the bite of a venomous snake, ruined him altogether. The boy, his eyes filled with tears, added that he had started no profession to support the large family, whose burden had suddenly fallen upon his head; and that he had with difficulty managed to reach Hardwar for discharging this last duty for his deceased father, who had brought him up with great care. The boy, by remembering his father's death as well as by the ill-treatment, offered to him by the priest, shed a shower of

tears so copiously as to melt a stony-hearted man; but the exorable priest was not a little moved to feel compassion on that boy's wretched condition.

All the by-standers told the boy to throw those nails &c., somewhere else in the Ganges, but the boy being afraid that his neighbours would outcaste him on receiving intimation of this fact from the priest, refused to comply with these instructions.

Nanak as well as other by-standers interceded for the boy, but all in vain. At last bargain was struck. It was settled that the boy should pay Rs. 2-8 to the priest and the remaining As. 8 in the opinion of the priest, would be sufficient to keep the boy alive for few days.

The boy, having executed that condition consigned the nails &c. of his deceased father to the Ganges and set out from Hardwar. It is not known whether the boy did ever reach his home begging charity from door to door, or he died of starvation on his way back to home, but it is certain that the priest lost the money he had extorted from that hapless boy, in a gambling which was going on close by.

Oh ! it is painful to describe the horrible crimes which our reverend priests perpetrate under the guise of religion. Our priests are made of such fibres that they shudder at the bare idea of an animal-slaughter, but they feel no scruple on their conscience in bleeding the hearts of their fellow-creatures. They are proud of

their creation from the mouth of Brahma, and hate the rest of the human-kind for their birth from the organs, lower than the mouth. They care not at all, if their fellow-creatures die of starvation, but the cow and peacock must not be allowed to starve. They are ready to sacrifice their lives for the protection of the monkeys; but the men of low-castes have no right to expect good treatment from their hands. Our learned priests feel no shame in bowing down their head on the feet of beasts; but the mere touch of their fellow-creatures, who deal in leather and shoes, defiles them all. They are ready to spend their whole fortune in erecting houses for the refuge of beasts; but they refuse to subscribe even a single farthing in the asylums for orphans and widows, whose sufferings they attribute to their past misdeeds. In a word, the works of these living gods are so unscrutable that we, the shallow-minded mortals are quite unable to fathom them.

O, ye, our countrymen, who blame the Government for the poverty of India, and accuse the British *Ráj* for famine & scarcity, how can you think that the Government, who suppressed *thuggee* and *dacoity*—who established peace and tranquility in the country—and who gave education and freedom to the people, has impoverished us. Such an enlightened Government cannot be expected to be ignorant of this fact that a Government cannot stand when its subject-people die of starvations. Dare not, therefore, say a word against the British people—so benevolent so generous and estimable—

when numerous outlets covered under the cloak of religion, exhaust the wealth of this country.

If you are true well-wishers and real philanthropists; go to Hardwar and Krukshetra; penetrate into the streets of Mathra and Kashi ji—the so called places of pilgrimage, but in reality the dens of vice and profligacy; and see what the men in charge of those sacred places are doing there.

Our indolent priests lie in wait for pilgrims and run to them as soon as they come in their sight. When the victims are secured, they stripe them of all they posses, which they effect by deceit and by entreaty and after all by extortion as they are safe under the shield of religion.

If you have will and leisure to watch over the actions of these reverend priests for a day only, you will find that the money, so deceitfully taken, is spent either in adultery and debauchery or in gambling and playing at cards. The hard-earned money which could save the starving population from imminent death and the naked from the inclemency of cold weather, is being lost in luxury and dissipations. There is not a man among them who has and who is not still indulging in the company of prostitutes.

How the society can be prosperous, when hundreds of its members are as indolent that they earn not a single pie by honest labour, but squander away, what-

ever they can snatch from the hands of the working classes who owing to want of sound education are so ignorant as not to be able to make distinction between hypocrisy and religion.

This is one of the most important causes of the poverty, penury and destitution, which have rendered the lives of millions intolerable in the country. Our reformers deliver lengthy speeches on these evils, but they do nothing—absolutely nothing—to establish a remedy against them. They point out causes which have to do nothing with these evils ; but dare not say a word against the priest craft. For the jury of our priests pronounces no other verdict on such an offence than excommunication from society, and gives no allowance for preferring even an appeal against this final decision. Who will bear such a disgrace and dishonour ? Who will suffer such a sever punishment. ?

But let us now take the thread of our narrative.

Nanak, having settled the dispute between the orphan boy and priest began to survey the multitude, which had gathered all around, some of the pilgrims, who had performed their ablutions earlier than other, were busy in washing their idols with the Ganges-water and in rubbing pieces of sandal-wood on stones for ornamenting the images and their own foreheads with its colour. Those, who had finished this process even were seated on the banks of the river like seagul, which watches the sea for hours to swallow a fish, which

unfortunately raises its head above the surface of water. A cloth, with a few pice on it, was spread before each of them ; apparently they were engaged in telling their beads, but with eyes half closed they anxiously looked for the man, who out of that multitude would be so fool as to be deceived by their outer appearance to bestow some charity upon them.

Those, who had lately arrived, were in the act of pulling off their clothes for performing the sacred ablution, while many of the pilgrims having finished bathing in the river, were offering the sacred water to the sun.

Nanak thought it proper to point out this last group, the largest of all, the fallaciousness of their proceedings, but they were so absorbed in throwing water towards the sun, that even the continual beatings of drums for hours could not turn their attentions to him. On the other hand, Nanak always preached his religion without hurting the feelings and breaking the hearts of the listeners, he, therefore, did not think it advisable to address an extempore speech to them.

He pulled off his clothes, bathed in the Ganges and began to throw up water like the pilgrims but in a direction contrary to theirs, that is, they were in the act of throwing water with their faces towards the sun, but Nanak stood turning his back toward it.

This process on the part of Nanak, roused the laughter of the pilgrims so that they gave up their own

pursuit and began to call him fool and idiot.* At length an elderly man asked Nanak what the latter was doing.

“I have” replied Nanak while he continued throwing water with his hands “sown wheat and barley in the fields of a village, named Kartarpur, which is more than two hundred miles far from here. As there is no one to take care for them in my absence, I water my fields to keep the crops green.”

“It is” returned the elderly man, “your folly to think that the water you sprinkle here will be able to irrigate your fields at two hundred miles’ distance.”

“If,” responded Nanak, standing up firmly before them, “it is my folly to send water to my fields at two hundred miles’ distance, how can you hope that the water, you offer here to the sun, will reach it at thousand and thousand miles’ distance.”

These words so touched the hearts of the pilgrims that they put faith on him and solemnly promised not to worship the sun and idols again.

Nanak’s fame spread all around. Pilgrims of all castes and climes came to him to receive religious instructions. Nanak also laboured hard in preaching and converting the pilgrims to Sikh religion.

Time, thus, soon passed away. At length pilgrims began to make preparations to leave Hardwar for their

homes. On the day, preceding their departure, they all went to Nanak to show respects to him. When they were all assembled, Nanak found a good opportunity to deliver the following speech to them.

“ You, gentlemen, have come here from all the parts of India; some from the Punjab, some from the Bengal, some from Dakhan and some from the villages at no great distance. You, likewise, after a couple of day’s sojourn here, intend to leave this place to-morrow morning for your respective homes, where you will be engaged in your works; some in ploughing, some in shop-keeping and some in other professions.”

“ Yearly, similar assemblies meet together in these plains and are scattered in all directions; but no one cares to estimate the sufferings, which the people have to endure in these journeys and the losses, which they suffer in these undertakings. Money which is so uselessly spent would have done a substantial good to the country, had it been used in the relief of the poor and needy.”

“ Who is responsible for all these human sufferings and pecuniary losses? None but the priests, who being the leader of the community, do not point out the people evils of these fruitless journeys, nay, they even induce them to repeat such visits as often as possible.”

“ Woe to the nation, which is unable to make the best use of its hard-earned money! Woe to the people, whose leaders are so selfish!”

“A good many of this audience are cultivators as well as landholders. First of all, I turn my attention to you ; partly because you are to be the backbone of the religion, which I preach and partly because you are so devoid of religion and education that you cannot understand even your own importance. I warn you that you should not be disheartened by the excessive labour, which your profession presents to you : for yours is the foremost, the noblest and independent profession.”

“You are in your duty, who out of it who may. You toil day and night to provide food for yourselves and for the world at large. Though you have sun-burnt, weather-tanned and be-soiled faces and possess no more than rude intelligence but you are the venerable of all ; in fact you are the men, who live manlike and work for the altogether indispensable ; ‘for daily bread.’ In fine, you must bear in mind that your work is a kind of worship if you do it honestly and thoroughly.”

“Some of you, whom I am addressing to-day are shopkeepers and money lenders. This profession is not less important than the one I have above described. If it is synonymous with a desire to serve the country and to help the poor and needy, it is the most honourable of all. If it signifies no more than a desire to fleece the customers and to enrich himself at the expense of others, it is the most despicable. Assuming that you have started this profession with the fullest intention of rendering services to the public, the first

temptation which you should avoid, is that of letting words be your masters instead of being master of your words. For in commercial business it is essential that those with whom you deal, may have full confidence in your words."

"Next thing, you should observe, is that the profit, you take on your merchandises, must be as low as possible. Never mind, if others make their principals twice and thrice; but remember that you, in the long run, will be winner in the race of commerce."

"If you lend money to a peasant, do not take such heavy interest as to ruin him; but deal with him so mildly that he by your help and you by his aid may be able to provide yourselves against the wants, which present themselves to both of you."

"If any debtor fails to pay instalments, be carefull not to take hasty steps so as to deprive him of all his movable and immovable properties. In doing so apart altogether from the loss, your debtor thus sustains, you yourselves are the greatest losers. You will have to experience the fate of that man, who had killed her goose, which laid him a golden egg every day, in order, to possess an inexhaustible treasure in one instant but he had gained nothing in that essay but disappointment and sorrow."

"If you recover only the principal without any interest from one of your helpless debtors, you will lose nothing, but gain the blessings of heaven.

Remember that God does not only help him who helps himself ; but He much more helps him who helps others in their tribulations."

"Let me now address to all of you together who have assembled here to hear my words. You must learn to be self-reliant as well as thorough workers. Remember that all great men of this country have been thorough workers. It was the characteristic of Ram Chanderji's works that the task he undertook, whatever its nature, was executed by him to the best of his ability. When he left home and took up his abode in jungles and forests, he did not even dream his splendid palaces and homely comforts. He remained for full 14 years in the wilderness, where wild beasts were his associates—where bare ground or occasionally some straw on it, formed his beddings for the night—where wild fruits and roots of trees served as his repast; in order that the promise, which his father had made with his step-mother, might be satisfactorily fulfilled. But when he took the burden of his Kingdom upon his head, he ruled the people so wisely and so justly that his subjects had no cause to complain against him. So was the case with Sri Krishana and Arjuna that they used to go on and on with their works untill they had executed them to their entire satisfaction."

"If you likewise want to be successful in your professions, go and do likewise. Have heart in your works, be sincere, honest and devoted to your duties, you will not fail of honor in your time and country."

“But to you, who have to work hard for your living, I give one more advice. You must not only do what has been said above, but you must also be contented. By this I do not mean that you are to make no efforts to rise in the world and that you are not to employ your energies and abilities in honest effort to lift yourselves up in a higher position, but I mean that you are to do your best to accomplish the work, entrusted to you without any care for the result, which must be left in the hands of God. You are only workers in the great garden of the Creator, who gives reward to every one in the way He thinks proper. If the result is not in your favour; if the rewards are unsatisfactory to you; you ought not to weep and cry but you should go on with your duties steadily and contentedly: for He knows what is better to you than that you can know for yourselves.”

“It is not all, I have a few more words of advice to give you. They, however, are to elevate your souls, to educate your minds and to purify your hearts. For what has been said above is more useful for the body than for the soul, which ennobles the heart and mind. You must remember that soul is eternal and imperishable, while body is only a temporary thing. The latter is to the former as the clothes, which we put on, are to our body!”

“As it is necessary for a man to put on clothes though they alone can not make him noble and great, so it is essential for the soul to assume the garment of

the body, in order to attain its perfection. Many men are of opinion that body has to do nothing with the soul, but I am convinced that unclean body is so much productive of ill-effects on the soul as the filthy clothes cause the derangement of the health of the body itself. For this reason, every one should keep his clothes as well as his body neat and clean not only to keep the health of his body but also to aid the soul in its noble designs. ”

“ When the clothes are so worn out that they can not shelter the wearer from the changes of the weather, they are changed for the new ones, in order that he may be able to retain his health to work for his livelihood to the time of his death. The soul, likewise, throws away the body, when the latter grows old and unserviceable and changes it for the new ones. Thus it goes on and on until it becomes as perfect as the Supreme Soul. Then this human soul, being pure and free from sins, soars to the divine abode, as the water evaporated by the heat of the sun, rises up in the air, to enjoy the heavenly blessings. ”

“ This is the fate of the soul of those men, who are true and virtuous; but the soul of him who is absorbed in the vicious and worldly actions, transmigrates again and again for countless ages. Troubles and sorrows, which human beings have to suffer in this world, are well known to all of you. It is, therefore, necessary that every one must do his best to avoid this transmigration as soon as possible. ”

“I, who have travelled all around like a physician making cures of those persons, infected with the disease of sin and evils—I, who am endowed with the power of fathoming the secrets of the human hearts—know full well that you have also left your homes and journeyed here only to search the means, which may enable you to avoid this transmigration. But you act like children; you labour to pluck grapes from thorns and delicious fruits from thistles. You endeavour to reap a rich crop from the barren ground and good harvest from uncultivated fields. You think that you will have salvation from your past sins by bathing in the Ganges and that you will be able to give satisfaction to the souls of your deceased parents by consigning their remnants to her waters.”

“But for only two things I highly praise you, first because you honour your parents so much that you do not allow even their boneashes to be trampled under the feet of men and beasts; and secondly, because you are so much anxious to be got rid of your sins that you have suffered endless troubles to reach here for this purpose alone. But you wage a fruitless war against the sin; you make useless endeavours to be free from its effects. You try to wash away your sins with the water of this river as the black spot on your clothes is removed by coming in contact with water. You should know that sin is not a black spot on the human heart; but it is such a stain of hellish-dye that all the human arts and skills are unable to obliterate it in the least.”

“ If the Ganges is endowed with a power to ward off the sins of creatures on earth, the fishes and crocodiles, which remain day and night in her waters would be the sole inheritors of the heavenly pleasures; and people, who reside her banks, would have no punishment for their mis-deeds. But it is not so. Laws of the nature are the same to all. When the sun shines, it shines equally on every thing. When fire burns, it burns every thing without any exception. If there is any retribution for the human mis-deeds and any rewards for their good deeds; they must be alike to all without any distinction of caste, colour and clime.”

“ Do not misunderstand me. I do not mean that you ought not to take baths in the rivers; nor, do I mean that you are not to go out of your homes to make journeys abroad. But I mean that your objects in doing them must be quite different from those, which you now have. Do the former as often as you can; for bathing in the river is great restorative of good health. Make journeys as long as possible; but it must be borne in mind that the object of travelling abroad is to learn the arts, and manufactures as well as enterprise and pluck of other nations. If you accomplish these objects in your journeys; your journeys will be beneficial to your countrymen as well as they will enable you to tide over the difficulties of the world.”

“ But you have no object for your journeys but to wash away your sins with the Ganges-water, which is an act of utter impossibility. This false belief has not

only made your undertakings useless, but has, likewise, deprived you of self-reliance, which makes the nations great and noble. Besides, you have become much more vicious, because many of you care not at all to guard their daily actions; as they believe that a single visit to Hardwar would be sufficient to cleanse their bodies as well as their souls from the sins of their past mis-deeds. Robbers and ruffians have increased in the country so much so that the rich and poor are in constant danger for their property and lives. They think that a small portion of their plunder enables them to reach Hardwar, where sins are forgiven for no great expense—where they are sure to attain the higher social position than honest workers, who have no surplus money to compete in charity with them. It is because there is so much infanticide and parricide in the country that the people have no dread of divine punishment. A part of the wealth, which the murderer gets by murdering his wealthy parents, and even a quarter of the money, which would have been spent on the marriage of the murdered daughter, had she been allowed to remain alive, is considered quite enough to win the heavenly blessings by the intercession of the Ganges-river, which is regarded as an agent on the earth to sell the merits of heaven. Suffice is to say that indescribable miseries and ruins, which are visible all around in the country, are the fruits of those false beliefs and superstitions, which have made a strong hold on the minds of its inhabitants. If the people become wise enough to give up these irrational and

ignorant beliefs in such supernatural agencies, they will be happy and form a great nation in the world."

"And let me now finish this speech with these concluding words."

"If you are seekers after truth and aspire to have salvation from your sins, earnestly implore the Creator, Who is One and Alone. Pray to Him, who is all-filling and all-powerful for the forgiveness of your sins. He alone has power to pardon the sins of the human beings, no one else either on the earth or on the heavens is able to encroach upon His authority. Go now to your homes and comply with these instructions, you would be prosperous in this world as well as in the world to come "

These words produced such a good effect on the minds of the pilgrims that they put faith upon God and became Guru Nanak's disciples. They promised not to worship the rivers and ponds as well as stones and statues. They, at length, retired to their respective camps and fell fast asleep.

Morning came, pilgrims set out from Hardwar for their homes. Nanak, likewise, resumed his journey to inspect other places of the same importance.

CHAPTER VII.

*Guru Nanak's visit to Jagannath puri and his debate
with the priests of that temple.*

PURI, one of the largest cities in Bengal, is situated on the shore of the Bay of Bengal. It is commonly called Puri-Jagannath on account of a temple, which is built there in honour of Jagannath, (a god of the Hindus).

The temple is very large and splendid and it contains innumerable wealth. It is the most important place of pilgrimage and holds the highest position of all the sacred places of the Hindus. For in this temple Jagannath, the master of the world is worshipped; while in other temples there are gods and goddesses who are inferior to him.

In Hindu theology, this temple has the same absolute power as in politics high court has authority to set aside the decision, made in lower courts. As the litigants, who are not satisfied with the decision of lower courts, and the same time are rich enough to squander money on litigation, prefer their appeals to high courts, so the wealthy Hindus, who have wandered on all the places of pilgrimage without any satisfaction to their spiritual desires, go in the end to visit the temple in Puri-Jagannath.

There the Hindus offer *pindās* to their deceased parents, give as much alms as they can to the priests in charge of that temple. If the parents of a Hindu die of violent death; as by a snake-bite or being drowned in the water, he is certain to purchase the pardon of sins for the departed souls by making some offerings there under the guidance of the priests of that temple. If a wealthy Hindu has no male offspring in his family, he spends a part of his patrimony to gain the blessings of the priests for the fulfilment of his object. If a wealthy Hindu family suffers from malignant diseases; and the cause of the malady is attributed by sorcerers to the wrath of the unclean spirits, then a visit to Jagannath is considered a best effective remedy against them. There the head of the distressed family performs some religious rites to gain the pleasures of the departed souls, and makes fervent prayers before the image of Jagannath for its kind intercession in this matter. If a man once in proper season performs *Sarādhās* for the dead at Jagannath, he is exempted from performing them annually at home.

Although the religion of a Hindu is polluted if he eats any food, touched by men of low-caste; but in Jagannath every Hindu pilgrim whether his caste may be high or low, has to eat rice, cooked in that temple without any distinction of this kind. If he eats any *kuchā* food out of *chokā*, he is ex-communicated; but every pilgrim brings *kuchā* food from Jagannath in order to distribute it among his relations and friends.

This shows that there is no place but Jagannath, where Hindu is not punished for breaking the *chokā* system, which is the fundamental principle of the Hindu religion.

It is the only place, which is considered to be the possessor of an absolut power for warding off the sins of the human beings even after their death. It is because Hindus from all parts of India, go to this "metropolis" of their religion for the good of their own souls and the souls of their deceased parents. The fact is that they believe that the priests of this metropolis are authorised to communicate directly with the authorities in charge of heavenly paradise, while those in charge of other places of pilgrimage which are subordinate to Jagannath, are unable to do anything without the recommendation of their superiors. For these reasons wealthy Hindus deposit as much as they can in the treasury, attached to the temple of the Jagannath, as they believe their deceased parents as well as they themselves after their death would be able to draw the sum, deposited there, from the treasury in heaven. It is, therefore, a place, which the Hindu; revere with the highest respect and where the noble and the rich of the Hindu community gather from all around.

This is the temple of Jagannath, to which Nanak directed his steps from Hardwar. He, on his way, visited Bindraban and Kashiji and profited the rich and poor of the cities, towns and villages, which came

in the way by his example and precept. Passing through dreary jungles and forests and crossing the rivers and streams he, at last, reached his destination.

It was the evening of a certain day in the winter season, when Nanak with Bala and Murdana found himself in the temple of Jagannath. He took lodging in a corner of the temple and began to survey the place all around. The temple was so magnificent that it resembled a palace. There being a spacious hall in the centre, in which image of Jagannath in the form of a human being stood. The image was carved of a huge stone in such a way that it seemed quite frightful. The head of the image was large and heavy and mouth so wide open; hands so hanging down and the whole figure from head to feet so dreadful and shocking that it appeared as though it would immediately handle up and swallow a human being the moment he comes in its reach.

This ghastly appearance was much more aggravated by the vermilion, which was rubbed all over it.

Everyone, who enters the temple prostrates himself before that image, which bears the name of Jagannath. He, then, makes a round all around it, offers some flowers and gold or silver, and rings the bell, which overhangs the image, and which is so heavy that it can with difficulty be moved by one man.

But Nanak neither bowed down to the image ; nor offered anything to it, nor rang the bell. He, on the other hand, continued looking scrutinizingly all around.

This extraordinary conduct on the part of Nanak astonished the priests of the temple ; but they spoke nothing to him, as they attributed it to his ignorance of rules, prevalent in that temple.

In the meanwhile preparations for the evening prayer commenced. People began to crowd in the temple : some with garlands made of the loveliest and choicest flowers ; some with eatables—some with delicious fruits—and some with gold and silver for making offerings to the image of the Jagannath. In a word everyone had brought with him offerings to offer them to the god of the temple nay that of the whole of India.

Incenses were burnt before the image, perfumes were rubbed all over it. The head-priest with a large plate of gold, in which innumerable burning lamps were placed, stood before the Jagannath, and other priests, standing behind him, began to chant hymns in praise of the said deity. Pilgrims as well as other citizens, who were in the temple stood up in a solemn mood and began to offer fervent prayers to the Jagannath, that their desires might be fulfilled.

Numerous bells began to ring forth their solemn peal and trumpets to sound the different songs. Horns were sounded and drums were so beaten that they

made so much noise in the temple that it became quite intolerable to the drum of the human ear. This noise was much more increased by the village dogs, which began to bark so wildly and so madly that it appeared as if they wept over the folly of the human beings, who, being the noblest of all the creatures on earth, endeavoured to please the inanimate objects by musics and other commodities, which are destined to the human species alone !

The priests went round and round the image of Jagannath for nearly half an hour and stopped in front of the image. There the head-priest placed the plate of gold on the ground and prostrated himself before the deity. This example was followed by the other priests as well as by those who were standing all around in the temple. Garlands and flowers were thrown on the image, and gold and silver were presented to it. In short every one offered, whatever he had brought with him, to the Jagannath and retired to his dwelling place.

Trumpets and drums ceased to echoe in the temple. Horns and other organs no more vibrated in the ear. Thus the evening worship of the Jagannath was over.

Nanak, unlike other pilgrims, had remained sitting all the while this evening worship of the Jagannath continued. This circumstance enraged the head-priest, who came to Nanak as soon as he brought the ceremony to an end.

“Are you,” enquired the priest of Nanak in an angry tone “an athiest that you have not joined us in the worship of the Jagannath. This conduct of yours, who appears to be a Hindu pilgrim, is quite unaccountable.

“I would have gladly joined you in the worship” replied Nanak as mildly and meekly as possible, “but I have not known whom you have offered these prayers.”

“These prayers” responded the priest in a persuasive voice, “were made to the Jagannath who has an absolute power upon all things on the earth and heaven—who can give the blind sight and make the lame to walk—who wards off the sins of his worshippers and fulfils all their earthly desires—in whose honour these extensive buildings have been raised—and whose statue stands before your very “eyes. This Jagannath’s fame,” continued the priest, has reached so far and wide that countless men and women of all castes and ranks daily visit this temple, which is his chief abode, and go back to their home with their desires satisfactorily fulfilled. It is a wonder that you neither, knelt down before his image, nor even got up to worship him. It is still more wonder that you being a Hindu are ignorant of the name of the Jagannath, who is superior to all the gods and goddesses of the world.”

“You were not worshipping” retuned Nanak in mild tone, “the Jaggannath, who is the master of the

world and heavens, but a statue, which can neither move nor speak nor smell ; or I would have been very glad to take a foremost part in the worship. For the true Jagannath, who has created the earth and heavens as well as men and beasts,—who is omnipotent, omnipresent, and free from death and birth, cannot be circumscribed at all. He lives in no temple, built by the human hands and resides in no statue, sculptured by the human arts and skills. He demands nothing from his creatures, whom he has made and supplied with every thing. Flowers and garlands, musics and songs, give Him no pleasure, lengthy prayers, full of repetitions, cannot win his favour. He is so lengthwise and crosswise that man, with all the human knowledge and skills, is powerless to make His image, nay he is quite unable even to conceive His form. He has no ears but He hears the complaints of all the creatures ; He has no eyes, but he sees everything and every event, which occurs throughout the whole universe. He has no feet ; but he can go throughout the earth and heavens in the twinkling of an eye, He has no office and no record ; but He remembers the misdeeds and good deeds of each of His creatures. He is all-filling, all powerful and so infinitely wise that he governs the earth and heavens without the aid of any body else. His names are so many that a voluminous book cannot contain them His qualities are so countless—so manifold and so numerous that all the religious books of the world are insufficient to describe even one of them.”

"Such being the case, it is a folly to say that the statue, which has no life—no reason—no instinct is the representative of the Supreme being, who is the master of the world and heavens."

"Hear, hear, I have some thing more to say. This temple cannot be the abode of the Great Master, these worthless things cannot adorn Him. These flowers and scents can not perfume His house, which is the whole universe over which blue sky with stars, hanging like diamonds, serves as a canopy and the sun and moon, the ever burning lamps pour out constant light in which all the flowers and vegetables, which grow on the earth, give forth fragrance and perfume. These horns and trumpets can not please Him, for the nature itself utters such melodious sounds that these artificial musics and songs can not equal them. These poor lamps can not give light to Him, who himself is the true light, from which all the lights, which shine the darkest recesses of the world, emanate. Without that light everything is dark and gloomy and nature apart from it, is nothing but a shadow, a delusion and a mirage."

"My heart," continued Nanak, "burns for the love of that true light. I feel hunger and thirst after Him. O, Lord, give me power to remember thy holy name so that there may be no fear of death and birth and no transmigration to my soul."

“If, you, reverend priest, thus worship Him with the singleness of your heart, and without any show and ceremony ; you are sure to have heavenly pleasure and ever lasting happiness ; or you will have to weep and pine when the time of your death comes near.”

The head priest as well as other people, who attracted by the discourse, had gathered there, were struck to hear Nanak's words, replete with profound knowledge and wisdom. They promised to worship the Great Master and give up worship of idols and images. Nanak's object, being fulfilled, he left the place and resumed his journey.

CHAPTER VIII.

Guru Nanak's visit the temple of Kali Devi in Calcutta; his tour in Siam, Burma and other adjoining Countries.

IT is the season, when the poor man, shivering from head to feet seeks the protection of fire; and the rich man clothed in warm clothes dare not leave his richly equipped rooms, furnished with every thing, needed for the time. The former has to work hard in order to satisfy the cravings of hunger, which the weather of that season sharpens; but the latter has good opportunity to enjoy all the earthly pleasures at his disposal.

A naked man sitting before the blazing fire counts the stars, twinkling bright in the dark sky, and complains of the lengthiness of the night; but a wealthy man sleeping on the warm and downy beddings dreams that the night has passed in the twinkling of an eye.

A poor cultivator, in the dreary night of that season watches over the field of sugar-canes and wheat; while those who are paid out of his poor pocket to keep watch over his property, sleep soundly in their houses. He weeps and cries that he has nothing to provide himself and his family with the clothes fit for

that season ; but those who snatch a great part of his hard earned money are absorbed in making arrangements for increasing the comforts of their bed-chambers.

In that season new trappings are prepared for a rich man's stables and new cushions for his domestic cats and dogs ; but a poor man passes those painful nights and days by the flames of fire and the heat of the sun.

This particular time, which is cursed by the poor and blessed by the rich, is no other than the winter season.

It was this season, when Nanak set out from Jagannath, which forms the subject of the preceding chapter.

Winter rains had also set in. Sky was covered with clouds. Cold winds of the north blew unceasingly to make the weather much more severe, but Nanak did not discontinue his journey.

Showers of hails which generally fall with the winter rains, had done great havoc on the crops all around ; and increased the inclemency of the weather so much as to be unbearable to the human frame ; but Nanak went on preaching his true doctrines from village to village.

The ploughman had left his fields to the heaven's care and took shelter in his cottage to warm his

benumbed limbs by the fire of its hearth ; and the herdsman drove his cattle, trembling from cold, back to their lair, where he burnt some hay to heat himself as well as the dumb creatures, dependent upon him alone. The peddler no longer went to sell his goods to a village, nor, the shop keeper opened his shop, as he was certain that no purchaser would visit his shop in that frosty weather.

A traveller, finding his clothes altogether wet, stopped in a neighbouring village to procure new ones, and the merchant took lodgings in an inn to refresh himself as well as his beasts of burdens. Birds sought their nests and the wild beasts entered into their dens, but there was one, named Nanak, who pursued his journey in such troublous days in a country, where he had no relations and no friends, in order to bring the people to the right path.

He reached Calcutta and visited the temple of Kali Devi, the black goddess, who had blackened the hearts of his worshippers for long and long ages.

He pointed out the people that their worship was fruitless and made them converts to his religion.

He, afterwards, passed over the sea and travelled through all the cities in Siam and Burma. In short there was no important place or temple all around which he did not personally visit and where he did not preach the words of Him, who had sent him in this world for this purpose alone.

Years had thus passed away since his departure from the place of his birth but he was not a little inclined to return to it. To him, who had come in this world to teach *monotheism* to the world at large, every place was his native land and every one was his friend.

But his disciples requested him again and again to go back to their homes, as they felt an intense desire to see their relations and friends. Nanak, on this account, directed his steps towards Talwandi and reached there after the lapse of a couple of months.

Nanak went directly to his paternal house, his disciples proceeded to their respective homes. He paid compliments to all his elders and equals, who, in return, embraced him tenderly and affectionately.

He met his sons, whom he advised to put all their cares upon Him, who is the Father of the whole universe. He saw his sister and brother-in-law and paid due reverence to them.

He met all his friends and disciples and pointed them out many practical hints on religious and worldly matters.

Months, thus, passed away, he at length made up his mind to make another tour throughout the world. He sent for Bala and Mardana and disclosed his intention to them. They consented to follow him, where he would lead them. Accordingly Nanak with his disciples, quitted his native town to make a journey longer than that he had done before.

CHAPTER IX.

How the tomb worship has originated in India.

Guru Nanak's visit to Sheikh Farid's tomb, where he addressed a lengthy speech to the people assembled on that fair.

WINTER season has passed away, and the summer had not yet commenced. When there is neither cold nor heat. In this season trees shed their old leaves and new shoots begin to sprout from naked branches. Tamarind trees are laden with fruits and mango gardens are in full blossoms. In short, in that season everything seems new and every scene appears pleasant and bright.

In those days sky changes from hour to hour. Now it is clear and the sun shines very bright. After an hour thick clouds completely envelope the sky as well as the sun. It thunders and flashes; drops of rain begin to fall. After another hour a strong gale blows from the south. Many a large tree is thrown down by it, and the clouds, which had covered the sky fly away in an instant before it. Again the sky becomes as clear as it was before.

Rabi crop has been harvested and the peasant has nothing to do but to lie indolently in his house. He as well as his children suffer from fever and dysentery owing to the consumption of new wheat and oats. Peasant's wife, who has no thought for the future, finding her granary filled up to the brim, remembers the vows, she had made to the Bhawani goddess and monkey gods, in the winter season, when her children were suffering from the Catarrh of the nose and month.

She, then, prepares many kinds of sweet-meats and other eatables as she has plenty of new wheat and sugar in her house, and leads her family either to the tomb of a Mohamadan martyr, who was slain while engaged in killing infidels, or to some old hollow tree in the jungle.

Selfish men, who lie in wait all around like vultures, precede her to the place with trumpets and drums. The tomb is at last reached and offerings are made to it.

She, then, bestows a great part of her eatables upon those who had enhanced her pomp and show and divides the rest among her family members.

The day is thus passed there and she returns home in the evening. To her joy she at night finds her children better than before. For the open air of the fields as well as the change of climate and place has done a great deal towards the recovery of their health.

Next morning she awakes earlier than she used to do before, and knocks at the door of her neighbours. Before they are opened she exclaims, "Lo ! my children are all well by the favour of Shah's tomb, which is near the old well and large peepul tree ! Yesterday we went to worship that tomb, to-day we are so well as we were never before."

This story spreads throughout the village, her example is promptly followed by other women.

Next season we see a large gathering on that spot. An ornamental cloth is spread over the tomb and flags with bunches of flowers and garlands, wave over it. Peddlers from villages all around go there to sell their toys and puppets and musicians resort to that place for amusing the spectators. Those who have no vows to perform, go to see their friends and acquaintances and to buy their necessities. Thus a large fair begins to be held annually on Shah's tomb.

He, who had died childless and penniless, is considered to be the giver of children and wealth to those who worship his tomb. He, who had never in his life shown mercy upon human beings is earnestly implored for mercy even when he had no existence. Recovering the patients, suffering from fever and dysentery is thought to be a child's play for the tomb and removing cholera and plague from infected villages is an easy task for it. It is strange that women whose menstruation is stopped by any other

cause than pregnancy, say that they have instantaneous relief by making some offerings to it. It is still more strange that robbers, who rob the people of all their furniture ; and who would have plundered the " Shah " himself, had he been living at present—offer a share of their booty to the tomb, which contains nothing but his remains.

These " Shahs " have extended their influence to such an extent that even the dancing girls and prostitutes, can not dare to have their names cut off from the category of their worshippers. They dance and sing at least for a night before their tombs and present a part of their ill-gotten money to them.

There is not only one Shah, but every city, every town and every village in India, has at least one or more " Shahs." These " Shahs " are such an extraordinary beings that they in their lives, persecute the people by their indiscriminate slaughter and after their death they demand sacrifices from them.

It is the spring season, when villagers visit their tombs for performing their vows to them, or, they fear that they would be attacked by diverse diseases. Hence in those days we hear the beating of drums to-day in this village and to-morrow in the other.

Nanak left his native town so soon, because he had heard that a large fair was to be held on Faried Shah's tomb, which is situated in Pakpattan in Montgomery district of the Punjab Province.

He made long and long journeys and reached his destination at an exact time. He took no notice of anything else ; he went straightway to Faried's tomb, which he found well decorated with flowers, ornamental cloths and flags.

On the left side of the tomb, wheat and sugar were heaped, and on the other side earthen vessels, filled with ghee and milk were placed. In front of the tomb, silver, gold, cloths and coins were lying and behind it clothes and eatables were kept. Many a man and woman with children, some suffering from small-pox, others from measales were standing in a solemn mood before it. Everyone had with him either some coin or a bundle of grain for offering them to the said tomb.

In the meanwhile a ferocious man of swarthy countenance, who was in charge of that tomb, muttered a few inarticulate words and knelt down before the tomb. His example was followed by all others, who were standing there with hand folded on their breasts. They, then, added what they had with them to the already offered-up materials, lying all around the tomb. They, thus, having finished their worship, vacated the place, which was filled up by another group. This group, likewise, underwent the same process and quitted the place. The process continued for the whole day long.

Nanak, finding a good opportunity to preach the true religion, stood upon a high place near the tomb and began to address the following speech to the people, who were assembled there for worshipping the tomb on their turn.

“How far will you, gentlemen, continue worshipping such absurdities? How long will you have belief in such preternatural agencies? You have much suffered owing to these superstitions and false beliefs; you should now be wise enough to give up all these fruitless worships.”

“How can you think that this tomb, which has no voice, no sound power of speech will be able to give you health and wealth? How can you suppose that this masonry, which is a solid mass of lime and bricks, will remove the sufferings of your children? How can you hope that this tomb, which itself is powerless and lifeless, will help you in your undertakings; and how can it aid you in your business when it is itself unable to remove even the filth, which may be thrown on it.”

You sing song and beat drums before this inanimate object; you offer eatables to these lifeless things, which can neither move, nor speak nor smell. You make endeavours to please these immovable bricks, which have no animation, reason or even an instinct. Suffice it to say that all your hopes are in vain, and all your endeavours are useless.”

"Are you not ashamed of prostrating yourselves before this brickwork, which was constructed by human hands with materials, supplied with the human labour and skill? Dogs and cats make urine on your sacred tomb; crows and kites throw their excrements on it; but you, who are proud of being human beings, prostrate yourselves before it and call it your god, your creator and benefactor. Birds and beasts laugh at you; but you are persistent in this fruitless worship. You thus by your folly and ignorance have degraded yourselves lower than the dumb creatures. It would have been better, were you not endowed with reason and the power of speech!"

"Do not understand that I mean to underrate Faried and his work: for he, who dishonours a devotee, dishonours Him who sent him. But his works have to do nothing with his tomb which has been built as a memorial and not a representative to him. The tomb has been built to remind the future generation of him; but you have made it a place of worship, nay, even an object of worship and adoration, which are due to God alone."

If you wish to honor Faried, read his writings and compositions, but by worshipping his tomb instead of gaining any thing, you would be the greatest losers: for tomb worship blunts the conscience, weakens the mind, and makes the worshippers forgetful of Him, whom every body is bound to pay divine reverence."

"Do not think that I blame you alone for all these useless worships prevalent among you. I know that it is not the fault of yours ; but it is the fault of the Brahmins, who teach you incredulous stories and absurd fables, which have to do nothing with the true religion—who have excluded you from studying and hearing the religious books, which they have monopolised to themselves alone—and who moreover have totally deprived you of the art of reading and writing, which is one of those peculiarities, enjoyed by the human species alone."

"They composed "Shastras" in which no mention of God is made, but which treat of the worship of idols and images. They divided the humankind into four classes. They assigned the highest place to themselves; "Kshatriyas" who sacrifice their lives for the country were given next position. Those who are engaged in commercial business were allowed to hold the third one. But the working classes which supply the world with materials necessary for the maintenance of human lives were numbered in the lowest class of *Shudras*."

"The Brahmins, moreover, preach you, that if you respect them, worship them and bestow a part of your wealth upon them ; you after your death would be able to take your birth in a class higher than the present one. Thus by and by you would be born as Brahmins, who alone, in their opinion, have the prerogative of worshipping the Almighty, reading the "Shastras" and attaining the *Mukt.* in the end."

But I point you out that it is their selfishness, conceit and vanity. God has no respect of persons. He loves the Brahmins and Shudras alike for both were created by Him alone. His doors are open to every one, who knock at them. He gives every thing to all who ask Him. He, the heavenly providence confers his blessings upon the whole humankind without any distinction of caste, colour and clime. Brahmins as well as Shudras have the same rights to worship Him and the same privilege of reading the Shastras: for, in fact, knowledge and religion are not the monopoly of professions, not the privilege of wealth and not the prerogative of rank; but these both gifts belong to hardworking men as well as to any other class of men."

"But there is one obstacle, which lies in your path. All the Shastras are in *Sanskrit*, which is a dead language and which is so hard and complicated that year and years' hard and continual study enables a man to read the easiest book in that tongue."

But you, who have to earn your livelihood by the perspiration of your brows, can not spend so many years of your busy life in pursuit of the Sanskrit literature. You, who live from hand to mouth are unable to provide your sons with means, necessary for the prosecution of their study in that language. You, who employ your sons very early in your profession, can not send them to Mathra and Benares, where Pundits well-versed in that tongue can be found—those Pundits even refuse to teach Sanskrit to any one but the Brahmins,"

“Under such circumstances it is not possible that you would ever be able to read the Sanskrit books and to know the wisdom and truth in them. Your attempt would be of no avail and you would gain nothing but disappointment and sorrow.”

“Think not that I am only to point you out your deficiencies and obstacles and thereby increasing your grief and sorrows, may I have come here to preach you this gospel and to give you this glad tidings that I am sent in this world in order to remove the obstacles, which lie in your path to the spiritual life.”

“You have, now, no need to send your sons to Mathra and Benares in order to learn Sanskrit from exorable priests, who endeavour to keep their knowledge under seal; but there is a literature, called Gurmukhi Bhahsa, whose characters, you as well as your children can learn within a couple of days. You have no need to learn by rote any grammar as the literature is your own tongue.”

“O, the peasant's girl, O, the merchant's wife rejoice and be exceedingly glad that the hour is near to come when you, sitting on the sofas will teach your sons and daughters the beautiful hymns, composed by me and my successors in your own tongue and written in the Gurmukhi letters.”

“Peasants, sitting in their barns and ploughing their fields, will read the Gurmukhi pamphlets; and

the herdsmen, while watching over their cattle, will pore over its treatises without the aid of any dictionary and comment."

"Soldiers, with satchels, filled with Gurmukhi *pustaks*, in their arms, will fight the severest battles on the inaccessible mountains of Afghanistan and in the trackless deserts of Africa; travellers will write their notes to their home-friend and acquaintances in Gurmukhi letters."

"Merchants will use it in their diaries and account books; and judicial courts will issue summons and keep record in its characters."

"Numerous Garanth's on religion and philosophy will be written in its alphabet, so that there will be no lack of Upnishdas and Shastras. The best Ramayans and the best Vedas, containing hymns, sung by the *Rishies* of the present age will be published in this literature and read in the *pathshalas* and on the house-tops."

"This is the mission I am born to perform. This is the heavy task I am to do in this world. My sole object is to stop evil customs and superstitions and to introduce monotheism which ennobles the soul, purifies the mind and makes the human heart an inexhaustible treasure of an everlasting joy and perennial source of happiness."

This speech was delivered with such a fluency and sincerity of heart that it so touched the hearts of the listeners that they repented of their sins and accepted the Khalsa religion. He, then, left Pakpatan and set out for other places, where he heard that the fairs of the similar kind were to be held. He preached on those fairs and made the people converts to his religion. He, thus, travelled in Bengal, Madras, Rajputana and Dakhan so that he left no important place which he did not personally inspect and where he did not preach his mission. Having finished his tour in India he set out to preach in foreign countries.



CHAPTER X.

*Guru Nanak's visit to Mecca and his debate with the
Kazies and Mullas of that place.*

MECCHA the largest city in Arabia, is known throughout the world, as it is the political capital of the Arabs as well as the religious capital of all the Muhammadans in the world.

Mecca has a building, which is supposed to have been built by the orders of God, hence the building is called the "House of God."

This so called "House of God" is considered such a sacred place by the Muhammadans that every Muhammadan thinks it his chief duty to visit the house at least once in his life.

Muhammadan theology shows that the Muhammadan, who only sees the house from outside is empowered to resist the fire of hell. He who enters the sacred building obtains forgiveness for all his past misdeeds. He who is so fortunate as to sleep for a night in that house can not be enticed to evil by the *Shaitan* and moreover has no punishment for his past sins. If a man once reads *Namaz* in that house, the reward would be one lac times more than that of reading, it outside its walls. Fire of hell will have no effect

on him and he will be allowed to enjoy the beautitudes of heaven. Hundreds of the loveliest girls and handsomest boys will serve him in the paradise, and the sweetest wines and the best perfumes will be given to him there for his use. If a man fasts for a day only in the month of Ramzan there, he on the day of judgement will have to give no account of his evil actions. Besides he will be allowed to enter paradise, where brilliant rills of milk and *sharbat* flew in abundance, and the sweetest fruits and the choicest flowers are scattered plentifully all around. If a man fasts there for the whole month of Ramzan, he as well as his forefathers and sons are allowed to enjoy the pleasures of the heavenly paradise for an unlimited time. In short, this house of the Muhammadan worship in Mecca is considered to have the power of warding off the vilest sins of its visitors and ensuring them of eternal happiness in the other world.

Religious books of the Muhammadans go so far to praise the mosque in Mecca that God thus spoke to Adam. "I am that God, who laid the foundation stone of the sacred building in Mecca. I will give the glory of having it finished to Abraham. I always reside in that house, hence the inhabitants of Mecca are my neighbours. Whoever seeks me and desires to see me will find me in the precincts of this house. I will daily send 70 thousand angels to make a round all around this building and will never withdraw them from it. Every year 80 thousand Hajies will come to see my

house, and if ever deficiency takes place, the number will be made up by adding angles to them."

Allured by these promises, Muhammadans from all parts of the world reach Mecca and spend a great part of their lives there. Many of them after a few month's sojourn there return to their homes ; but those who are so old as to serve their families no longer, stay there until death overtakes them. For they believe that if a Haji dies in that building his rewards are quite unsurpassable."

"When Nanak had visited all the important places in India as well as the temples of Hindus, Jains and Budhists ; he resolved to see this place of the Mohamadan pilgrimage. Disguising himself as a Mohamadan *Darveish* he sailed from the coast of Hindustan. Journeying by sea and by land he at last reached his destination."

The sun had already set, he therefore went direct to the above-mentioned mosque. He took his lodgings in its yard and lay down to sleep with his feet towards the above-mentioned house.

Some of the Hajies, who were sleeping all around the building saw Nanak lying in a position contrary to their religious belief. They informed the Kazie of this extraordinary proceedings.

Kazie was much enraged to hear that a man was lying in the very yard of the mosque in a position,

insulting the sacred place. He immediately followed the informants and was much more enraged on finding the information true to a word.

“Who is this infidel ;” vociferated the Kazie, “that is lying with his feet towards the “house of God.”

“I know” replied Nanak “that God exists everywhere and in every direction. Let me know, please where there is no God, so that I may turn my feet to that side.”

These words so touched the heart of the Kazie that he gave no reply but run to his friends and co-religionists and informed them of the noble thoughts of Nanak, whom the Kazie had taken for an infidel.”

The Kazie told them that Nanak was undoubtedly a devotee, but he was ignorant of the religion of their prophet. The Kazie therefore insisted his friends to come to Nanak to explain their religion to him so that he might be persuaded to embrace Muhammadanism.

Accordingly, Kazies, Mulas and Hajies assembled together and came to Nanak. They sate by him for a while in silence ; one of them, at last, spoke as follows.

“These learned men, who have learnt the holy *Qurán* by heart, these pious men, who have fasted for months in these sacred buildings and I, who have the honour of being in charge of this house of God, have come here to teach you the religion of our prophet,

which is fully described in the holy Koran, which God himself spoke through our prophet, Muhammad. This religion, the only religion from God, points us out that how far learned and wise a man may be—how far virtuous he may lead his life—how strictly he may be believer in one God, he after his death can not be allowed to enjoy the pleasures of the heavenly paradise, where numerous girls of moon-like faces and countless boys of shining countenances, are ready to serve the followers of our prophet—where followers as well as herbages give forth sweet fragrance, and beautiful birds sing pleasing songs to amuse its tenants—and where innumerable streams of milk and wine, glide smoothly for luxury and enjoyment of the believers in Koran, until he becomes Musalman and reads the *Kalma*, which signifies that “there is one God and Muhammad is his prophet.” Besides, on the day of judgement Muhammad will sit by God and intercede for his followers. Those, who are unbelievers in the prophet and the Koran, will be sent to hell, where flames of burning fire scorch their bodies and venomous snakes coil round them as soon as they are ushered in that dreadful place.”

“The holy Koran,” continued the Kazie, “authorises us, the followers of the prophet, to kill the infidels ruin their temples and houses and invest their wealth in our business. We, therefore, request that you who are wise and prudent, will read the *Kalma* and accept this religion, which gives so much power in this world and so much luxury and power in the world to come.”

Nanak heard the discourse of the Kazie' attentively when he had no more to say, Nanak replied him as follows.

"Let me first of all point you out that you yourselves are not true Musalmans. The word Musalman can be applied to him, who has strong faith in God alone. But the *Kalma*, which makes you Musalmans, shows that you are believer not only in God alone but likewise in a man, called Mohamad; as if the latter is partaker in God's works or God is powerless to do any thing without his aid."

"If Mohamad preached the word of God among you; this fact can not entitle him to add his name in a *Kalma* along with Him: for a herald who proclaims the order of an emperor in a city or even in a country, has no right to include his name in the emperor's seal or to add his resemblance to the effigy of the emperor on the coin."

"Besides, the religion which makes its adherents furious and pitiless and destroys the peace and tranquillity of the world and brings slaughter and bloodshed among the people can not be the religion from all-merciful God; while the objects of a true religion are to establish peace in the country as well as on the minds of the people and to make its followers so kind, and merciful as the Father in heaven is. By the nature of the dogmas, which your religion teaches to the people, you yourselves can judge in what light the religion of your prophet stands."

"Followers of the prophet with a sword in one hand and Koran in the other force the people to accept Koran or its alternative. How can you therefore think that the religion, which allows so much atrocities to be perpetrated on the human being, is a true religion, which spreads in the world neither by sword nor by force but by the spirit of God."

"You persecute other nations, chiefly the Hindus, destroy their temples and houses and rob them of their wealth under the plea that God has permitted you in the Koran to kill the infidels and idolators. You go to take out mote from the eyes of others while there is a beam in your own eye. You try to teach Monotheism to the world; while you yourselves are worse than idol-worshippers."

"If the Hindus and other nations, whom you call infidels worship stones and statues, you worship this building. If they limit the Almighty in an image, you circumscribe Him in that house. If they take ablutions in the Ganges for the purification of their souls, you bathe in the well of Zamzam for the same purpose. If they make offerings to their gods, you make sacrifices before this house as an atonement for your sins. You moreover, have belief in such incredulous fables, and fictions that even those whom you call heathens discredit them."

"You have come to convert me to the religion of your prophet by giving me the allurements of the earthly powers and the pleasures of the imaginary

paradise. Malediction to that religion, which instigates its followers to persecute and plunder their fellow creatures! Malediction to that paradise, which is filled with girls and boys as well as with flowers, fruits and wine for the enjoyment of those who are the adherents of that religion!"

"It is a pity if the blind goes to lead the blind but it is still more pity when the blind tries to lead him who has eyes to lead the world!"

"Let me, now, in conclusion, point you out that if you aspire to be free from your sins, worship Him who has not only created this house but the world, heavens, sun and stars. If you want to be a pious man, do not waste time in cramming the Koran but try to subdue your passions: such as fury, anger, avarice and adultery. If you wish to be a true Musalman, remember Him alone, who is omnipotent and omniscient. If you desire to obtain the eternal pleasures love your fellow-creatures more than your own lives so that you may be as perfect as the Father in heaven is."

Kazies, Mulas and Hajes were so struck to hear these words that they gave no reply and went away, praising him whom they had come to convert to their religion. Nanak also left Mecca and resumed his journey.

CHAPTER XI.

Guru Nanak's final Communion with the Supreme Soul. 1538 A.D. October 4.

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NANAK, having set out from Mecca as described in the preceding chapter reached Madiena, where he pointed out the Arabs, who were engaged in worshipping the tomb of Mohamad that they would gain nothing from this fruitless worship.

He, thus, made them converts to his religion and left this place also. Having inspected old the important places in Arabia, he at last directed his step back to his native land

Travelling through Turkey, Persia, Afghanistan and Kashmir he at last came back in the Punjab. There he continued preaching his mission so far that thousands of men both Hindus and Mohamadans accepted the Khalsa religion.

In the meanwhile a promising young man, named Lahna, Khatri by caste became Guru Nanak's disciple. He served Nanak so heartily and obeyed him so sincerely that Lahna became a chief favourite to him. Nanak tried him on many occasions but Lahna came out successful in the trial. Nanak, finding Lahna best of all his devoted adherents, began to give him religious

instruction so as to make him the best spiritual teacher of mankind. Lahna was also so sagacious and intelligent that he soon learned the niceties of religion so much as to be able to teach others by his words and writings.

Nanak, now, took quarters at Kartarpur and taught the people, who came there; while Lahna used to go all around for preaching the true village.

Lahna performed this duty so well that Nanak was so much pleased with him that he surnamed Lahna Guru Angad and nominated him his successor. Thus Guru Angad by his conduct and behaviour had fully proved that he was capable of carrying out Guru Nanak's mission after the departure of the latter from this world.

Guru Nanak, a few days before he left this world sent for his disciples and exhorted them to be obedient to Guru Angad in religious as well as in worldly matters; as he told them that his soul would ever abide with his successor.

Nanak, likewise, directed them to dispose of his body without any show and ceremony, and strictly prohibited them from performing the religious rites which are usually observed by the Hindus on the death of their elders. Nanak, moreover, explained to them that the salvation of a man depended not on the ceremonies which are observed after his death but upon

the actions, he did in his life-time. In short it was the tenth of Asuj Vadi 1596 Bikaram era when Nana while engaged in giving exhortations to his disciples for their future welfare, departed from this world.

News of this sad event spread like a lightning all around. His disciples, both Hindus and Mohamadans assembled there from various parts: some, who lived near, had already come there to receive instruction from his lips; but those, who lived far off, arrived late, only to shed tears of affliction on his remains.

As Nanak was honoured both by Hindus and Mohamadans; the former claimed that Nanak was their Guru; so they would burn his remains according to the custom, prevalent among them, the latter decided that they would bury them in pursuance to their religious laws. They began to debate among themselves on this point; at last they reached the place where his remains were placed. On raising the funeral cloth to their astonishment they found that the remains were altogether disappeared except the cloth, which covered them. They, then, divided the cloth into two parts; one part was burnt by the Hindus and the other part was interred by the Mohamadans. Thus Nanak's soul as well as his body disappeared from the eyes of his disciples.

But his fame did not go with them. On the other hand, it grew more and more with the lapse of time. Before his death his name was not so much renowned.

it is now a days. It is true he travelled far off in foreign countries ; but in his life-time his name was known to his disciples only.

He like a sower went throughout the world, sowing the seed of his religion ; but no one cared at the time that the seed would grow up a large tree. No one thought that this tiny thing in the hands of him, who had assumed neither the title of a *sawami* nor of a *rishi* nor of a prophet, would do so much wonders in this world. The seed seemed for a short while rotten in the ground, it at last germinated and rooted into a plant.

Jealous men could not bear to see it in a flourishing state. They looked all around and found the plant growing fast every moment. They then sharpened axes and began to cut its branches.

But they were wonder-struck to see that the more branches were cut, the stronger its roots grew ; for, the sap, which came out by cutting the branches, flowed down to nourish the roots, so that the plant, apparently seemed in a ruined state, but its roots had gone deep into the ground.

Hindus and Mohamadans joined together to pluck at the plant but all in vain. Mohamadan Emperors and Hindu Rajas despatched their armies to root it out, but their efforts were all frustrated. At last the tree, replanted by Nanak, ingrafted by his successors and

nourished in the blood of martyrs grew so much so that its branches reached Burma and China as well as Europe and Africa.

Hindus and Mohamadans, who were its antagonists began to crowd under its refreshing branches. Rich and poor, high and low ran to enjoy its cool and inviting shades. To speak plainly, this tree which is the religion, founded by him, so much attracted the minds of the people that it became a state religion within a very limited time, and the hymns, composed by him were so much liked by every one that they were translated in other tongues. Thus Guru Nanak's name on whose remains not a monument was raised, nor ceremony performed, became so much renowned that it would never be effaced from the minds of the human beings, "as he had lost his life, so he saved it for ever and ever."

In fact his soul separated from his body, but he has not "died" in true sense of the word. Emperors and Kings who subdued the nations, and ruled the countries, have died; but he is still living and will remain alive for ever and ever.

Alexander, who had marched throughout the world for the fulfilment of his ambition with large armies, heavy canons and innumerable stores is no longer remembered; but Nanak's name, who went from village to village with no escort,—no provisions—no treasures—is ever shining on the minds of the nations of the world.

Go in a city or in a town or even in a village, its inhabitants will point you out a "pipal" tree or a mango garden, where Nanak had taken lodgings only for a night; but the sites of Alexander's camp are not well known even to those who are well-versed in the history of the world.

Where are Mahamud and Timur, who had amassed innumerable wealth by cutting the throats of their fellow creatures? Who knows them? Who remembers them, who were once terror of humankind? They are limited in the pages of the history; but Nanak's name has been written in indelible letters on the minds of the people of the world.

Go in a village, which has a few habitations, you find that there still exist in India such men that do not know who their present rulers are and where their native land is even in this time when civilization has made so much progress in the country—when schools have been established from village to village to enlighten the people—when post offices and telegraphs work constantly to bring intelligence from far off lands; but they will describe Guru Nanak's life, his wanderings and his teachings.

Who taught them this lesson? Who told them to remember it by heart? Who induced them to bequeath it to their successors? Who did such miraculous works which are above the human powers. It is

nothing but God's will to keep Nanak's name alive ages and ages.

Go wherever you please, you will find that people remember Nanak more dearly than they do their kinsmen and parents. Pious men daily repeat his name countless times in order to please Him, who sent him to do so much noble work in this world.

Under such circumstances it is no exaggeration to say that Nanak still lives and aids his followers in their noble design.



CHAPTER XII

CONCLUSION.

THE preceding chapters have fully shown the reader how Nanak was born—how he was brought up and how he travelled throughout the world and made the people converts to his religion. He has, likewise, been shown how Nanak departed from this world and how his religion spread all around against all obstacles.

To tell the truth, all these things were done by Nanak as they were done by the founders of other religions. But there is one superiority, he holds over his competitors in the vast field of religion.

The founder of every religion is honoured by his followers only; but Nanak is universally loved and revered by the men of all religions and castes.

Whether you go in a church or in a mosque or in a temple, you will hear the people bestowing the highest eulogies on the amiable conduct of Nanak. Christians say that Nanak is one of their saints, Muslims declare that he is their prophet and Hindus claim that Nanak is one of their rishis. In every religious society speaks in praise of him and uses the passages, composed by him in confirmation of its own dogmas.

These facts fully prove that Nanak was endowed with such exceptional qualities as to win the hearts of its antagonists. On this account in those wild days when the sword of the Mohamadan bigotry flashed on the heads of the Hindus—when no one could utter a syllable against the religion of the crescent, he could point out the Mohamadans defects, existing in the religion of their prophet. He delivered lectures on the sacred places and mosques ; but no one spoke a word against him. On the contrary, every one became : attention to listen to him.

The fact is that Nanak's foremost policy was preach his religion in such a way as not to break hearts of his auditors. He used to introduce his speech with such an ingenuity that the listeners at first thought him a simple and ignorant man, but at the end arrived at such a clear conclusion that they were astonished to find him a treasure of profound knowledge and wisdom.

On this wise he made the bigoted Arabs in Mecca know that God existed not only in the west but in all directions and everywhere. He, likewise, showed pilgrims at Hardawar that they would not be able to send up their water to the sun.

Had there been any other preacher but Nanak, the former would have beaten him out of their sacred building ; and the latter would have drowned him in their sacred river. But Nanak expounded the object

is view so wisely and so cleverly that the listeners had no alternative but to assent to his proposals.

For these reasons we can say that it was Nanak alone, who knew the method of preaching religious principles without creating a disturbance among the people. Christ and Mohamadan, although they attracted numerous proselytes, were altogether deficient to him in this respect. Christ by his bold preaching had caused so much discontentment among the Jews, that they caught him, bound him and hanged him on the gibbet. So was the case with Mohamad that he likewise, owing to a rising against him among the Arabs had fled to Madiena and remained in constant danger for his life.

Such a harsh treatment was offered by the people to both Christ and Mohamad in their own native lands; but Nanak preached his religion in foreign countries—to foreign nations; but no quarrel ever took place among those, whom he addressed his lectures. Christ and Muhammad confessed that they had come to bring slaughter among the people, but Nanak's chief object was to keep the peace of the people undisturbed. For in Nanak's opinion it is impossible for the people to understand the niceties of a true religion, until their minds are free from the agitation which the disturbed state of the country brings upon them.

It is no doubt that Nanak acted like a good physician. He reached his patients in the form of a

friend, consoled them in their distress, applied annodyne on their bruises and made wonderful cures. Founders of other religions drove all the cattle with the same rod, but he treated every one according to his habits and circumstances.

It is because we assign the highest seat for Nanak in the religious hall, as it was he alone who knew how to establish peace in the country as well as on the minds of the people. It is because we, in conclusion, suggest the people to follow Nanak and walk as he had walked, so as to enable them to enjoy peace and prosperity in this world and an eternal happiness in the world to come.

THE ENDS







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